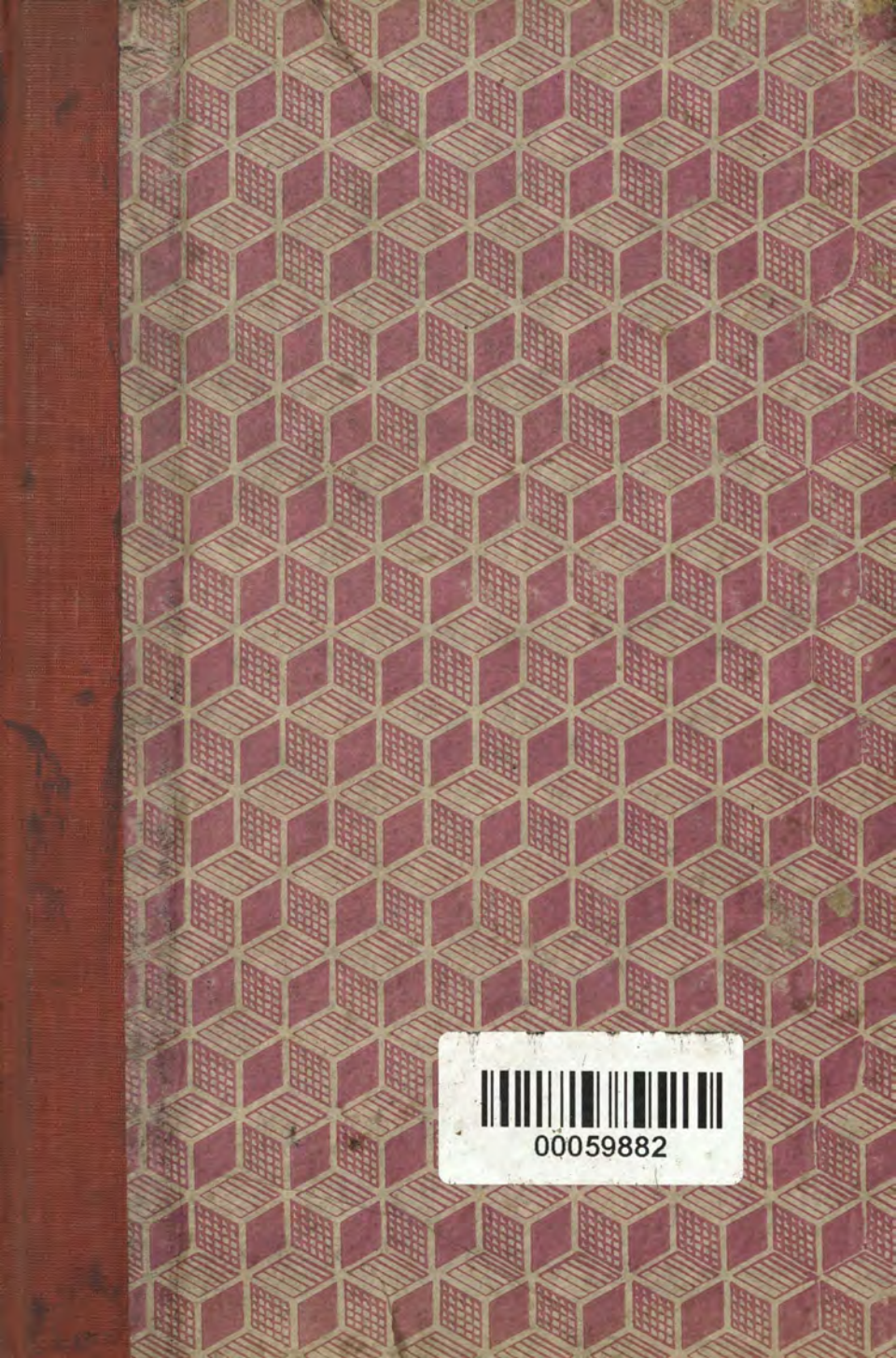
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THE PHILOSOPHY

OF THE

ACTIVE AND MORAL POWERS OF MAN.

VOL. II.

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PART SECOND

OF

OUTLINES OF MORAL PHILOSOPHY.

F.b.4

DUGALD STEWART, ESQ.

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THE PHILOSOPHY

OF THE

ACTIVE AND MORAL POWERS OF MAN.

[BOOKS THIRD AND FOURTH.—Ed.]

OF THE VARIOUS BRANCHES OF OUR DUTY.

The different theories which have been proposed concerning the nature and essence of Virtue have arisen chiefly from attempts to trace all the branches of our duty to *one* principle of action, such as a rational self-love, benevolence, justice, or a disposition to obey the will of God.

In order to avoid those partial views of the subject, which naturally take their rise from an undue love of system, the following inquiries proceed on an arrangement which has, in all ages, recommended itself to the good sense of mankind. This arrangement is founded on the different objects to which our duties relate. 1*st*, The Deity. 2*d*, Our Fellow-creatures. And 3*d*, Ourselves. [Of these, the Third Book contains the First; the Fourth Book, the Second and Third.—*Ed.*]

BOOK THIRD.

OF THE DUTIES WHICH RESPECT THE DEITY.

As our duties to God (so far as they are discoverable by the light of nature) must be inferred from the relation in which we stand to him as the Author and the Governor of the universe, an examination of the principles of natural religion forms a necessary introduction to this section. Such an examination, besides, being the reasonable consequence of those impressions which his works produce on every attentive and well-disposed mind, may be itself regarded both as one of the duties we owe to HIM, and as the expression of a moral temper sincerely devoted to truth, and alive to the sublimest emotions of gratitude and of benevolence.

PRELIMINARY INQUIRY INTO THE PRINCIPLES OF NATURAL RELIGION.

OF THE EXISTENCE OF THE DEITY.

CHAPTER I.

[OF THE PROOFS OF THE EXISTENCE OF THE DEITY; AND FIRST, IN GENERAL, THE PROOF A PRIORI.—*Ed.*]

It is scarcely possible to conceive a man capable of reflection, who has not, at times, proposed to himself the following questions:—Whence am I? and whence the innumerable tribes of plants and of animals which I see, in constant succession,

rising into existence? Whence the beautiful fabric of this universe? and by what wise and powerful Being were the principles of my constitution so wonderfully adapted to the various objects around me? To whom am I indebted for the distinguished rank which I hold in the creation, and for the numberless blessings which have fallen to my lot? And what return shall I make for this profusion of goodness?—The only return I *can* make, is by accommodating my conduct to the will of my Creator, and by fulfilling, as far as I am able, the purposes of my being? But how are these purposes to be discovered? The analogy of the lower animals gives me here no information. They, too, as well as I, are endowed with various instincts and appetites; but their nature, on the whole, exhibits a striking contrast to mine. They are impelled by a blind determination towards their proper objects, and seem to obey the law of their nature in yielding to every principle which excites them to action. In my own species alone the case is different. Every individual chooses for himself the ends of his pursuit, and chooses the means which he is to employ for attaining them. Are all these elections equally *good?* and is there no *law* prescribed to man? I feel the reverse. I am able to distinguish what is right from what is wrong; what is honourable and becoming from what is unworthy and base; what is laudable and meritorious from what is shameful and criminal. *Here*, then, are plain indications of the conduct I *ought* to pursue. There is a law prescribed to man as well as to the brutes. The only difference is, that it depends on my own will whether I obey or disobey it. And shall I alone counteract the intentions of my Maker, by abusing that freedom of choice which he has been pleased to bestow on me by raising me to the rank of a rational and moral being?

This is surely the language of *nature;* and which could not fail to occur to every man capable of serious thought, were not the understanding and the moral feelings in some instances miserably perverted by religious and political prejudices, and in others by the false refinements of metaphysical theories.

How callous must be that heart which does not echo back the reflections which Milton puts into the mouth of our first parent!

> . . . . "Thou sun, (said I,) fair light,
> And thou enlightened earth, so fresh and gay,
> Ye hills and dales, ye rivers, woods, and plains,
> And ye that live and move, fair creatures, tell,
> Tell, if you saw, how came I thus, how here;
> Not of myself; by some great Maker then,
> In goodness, as in power pre-eminent;
> Tell me how I may know him, how adore,
> From whom I have, that thus I move and live,
> And feel that I am happier than I know."*

In this manner, a consideration of the relation in which we stand to God must satisfy us that it is *our duty*, or (to vary our language) that it is *morally right* we should obey *his* will, as manifested by that inward monitor, established by himself as his vicegerent in our breast. Our moral powers give rise to religious sentiments, and these become, in their turn, the most powerful inducements to the practice of morality.

In the course of our argument concerning the moral attributes of God, we shall find reason to conclude that our hopes are not limited to this life, and that there is solid ground to expect a farther interposition of Divine power for the reward of virtue and the punishment of vice,—a conclusion which will furnish another very powerful sanction to the laws of morality. I shall treat of the presumptions for a future state under the article of *Natural Religion*, because the moral attributes of the Deity furnish the strongest arguments in support of it. At the same time, the subjects are not necessarily connected. Even absolute atheism cannot destroy entirely the anticipations which bad men have of future punishment, nor would they reason consequentially if it did; for the same blind necessity which brought them into this world may carry them into another. Whether it be owing to an overruling intelligence or not, it is a *fact* which nobody can deny, that there are general laws which regulate the course of human affairs, and

* [*Paradise Lost*, B. viii. 273.]

that even here we see manifest indications of a connexion between virtue and happiness. Why may not *necessity* continue that existence it at first gave birth to; and why may not the connexion between virtue and happiness continue for ever?

Before entering on the following discussions, it is proper for me to take notice, in the first place, of the insuperable difficulties we may expect to encounter in the course of our inquiries; and, secondly, of the illegitimacy of any inference drawn from this consideration against the certainty of the truths which it is our leading aim to establish. Of the justness of both remarks, no illustration so striking can be produced as the difficulties we have already experienced in our researches concerning the powers of the human understanding; that part of the universe which of all others would seem to lie the most completely within the reach of our examination: and, accordingly, an argument has been drawn by Locke from this acknowledged ignorance of man concerning his own nature, to moderate the arrogance of his pretensions when he presumes to speculate concerning the attributes of God. "If you do not understand the operations of your own finite mind, that *thinking thing* within you, do not think it strange that you *cannot comprehend* the operations of that *Eternal Infinite Mind* who made and governs all things, and whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain."[1]

In proof of the existence of the Deity two modes of reasoning have been employed, which are commonly distinguished by the titles of the arguments *a priori* and *a posteriori*; the former founded on certain metaphysical propositions which are assumed as axioms, the latter appealing to that systematic order, and those combinations of means to ends which are everywhere conspicuous in nature.

[1] Locke's *Essay*, Book iv. chap. 10, § 19. The same thought occurs in Pascal.

"L'homme sait si peu ce que c'est que Dieu, qu'il ne sait pas ce qu'il est lui-même; . . . mais autant l'essence d'un *Dieu est incompréhensible* pour moi, autant son existence m'est intimément évidente. La preuve en est en moi; et comme moi, tout homme porte cette preuve en lui-même."—[*Pensées*, Partie II. Art. v. § 12, alibi, ed. Renouard.]

The argument *a priori* has been enforced with singular ingenuity by Dr. Clarke, whose particular manner of stating it is supposed to have been suggested to him by the following passage in Newton's *Principia*:—"Æternus est et infinitus, omnipotens et omnisciens, id est, durat ab æterno in æternum, et adest ab infinito in infinitum: omnia regit, et omnia cognoscit quæ fiunt aut fieri possunt. Non est æternitas et infinitas, sed æternus et infinitus; non est duratio et spatium, sed durat et adest. Durat semper, et adest ubique; et existendo semper et ubique, durationem et spatium constituit. . . . . Deum summum necessario existere in confesso est: et eâdem necessitate *semper est et ubique.*"*

The substance of Clarke's argument is essentially the same, amounting to the following proposition, that "space and time are only abstract conceptions of an immensity and eternity which force themselves on our belief; and as immensity and eternity are not substances, they must be the attributes of a Being who is necessarily immense and eternal."†

"These," says Dr. Reid, "are the speculations of men of superior genius; but whether they be as solid as they are sublime, or whether they be the wanderings of imagination in a region beyond the limits of human understanding, I am unable to determine."‡ After this candid acknowledgment from Dr. Reid, I need not be ashamed to confess my own doubts and difficulties on the same subject.[1]

* [*Scholium generale*, at end, 2d edit.]

† [Clarke's *Demonstration*, &c., Vol. I. prop. 4.—*Collection of Papers*, &c.; Clarke's first and third Replies, &c.]

‡ [*Intellectual Powers*, Essay I. chap. iii.—*Works*, p. 343, *b*.]

[1] An argument, substantially the same with that of Newton, for the existence of God, is hinted at by Cudworth. —*Intellectual System*, Chap. V. sectt. iii. iv. § 4. Also by Dr. Henry More, *Enchiridion Metaphysicæ*, Chap. VIII. § viii. See Mosheim's Latin Translation of Cudworth, Tom. II. p. 356, Lugd. Batav. 1773. [Cap. V. sect. iii. § 4, note (f).]

Dr. Price, in the last edition of his *Review of the Principal Questions and Difficulties in Morals*, has attempted to illustrate and enforce Clarke's argument, by placing it in a light somewhat different from that in which it occurred to the author; but he appears to me, by departing from the language of Clarke and Newton, to have involved their ideas in additional mystery. In the course of this reasoning he observes, that "God is wisdom rather than wise, and reason rather than reasonable." In like manner, (he continues,) "he is eternity rather than eternal, immensity rather than immense, and power rather than powerful."—(*Review*, &c. &c. p.

But although the argument, as stated by Clarke, does not carry complete conviction to my mind, I think it must be acknowledged that there is something very peculiar and wonderful in those conceptions of Immensity and Eternity which force themselves on our belief. Nay farther, I think that these conceptions furnish important lights in the study of natural religion. For when once we have established the existence of an intelligent and powerful cause from the *works of creation*, we are unavoidably led to apply to him our conceptions of immensity and eternity, and to conceive him as filling the infinite extent of both with his presence and his power. Hence we associate with the idea of God those awful impressions which are naturally produced by the idea of Infinite Space, and perhaps still more by the idea of Endless Duration. Nor is this all. It is from our ideas of Space and of Time that the notion of Infinity is originally derived, and it is thence that we transfer the expression by a sort of metaphor, to other subjects. When we speak, therefore, of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness, our notions, if not wholly borrowed from space and time, are at least wonderfully aided by this analogy; so that the conceptions of immensity and eternity, if they do not of themselves demonstrate the existence of God, yet necessarily enter into the ideas we form of his nature and attributes. It may be worth while to add, that the notion of *Necessary Existence* which we derive from the contemplation of space and of time render the same notion, when applied to the Supreme Being, much more easy to be apprehended than it would otherwise be.

500, 3d edit.) The excellent and learned writer seems to have considered this thought as entirely new; but it is to be found in Hobbes's *Answer to Bishop Bramhall*, where it is quoted from the writings of that prelate. I presume (for I have never seen the Bishop's works) that it is faithfully copied from some one of his publications. "Upon this silly conceit, he (Tho. Hobbes) charges me for saying that God is not just but justice itself, not eternal but eternity itself, which he calleth unseemly words to be said of God—I wish he had considered better with himself before he had desperately cast himself upon these rocks."—Hobbes's *Works*, p. 428, fol. ed.

On this point I cannot help agreeing with Hobbes, that, "though all men in the world understand that *the eternal* is God, yet no man can understand that *the eternity* is God, any more than that a wise man and his wisdom are the same; or that any attribute in the abstract is the same with the substance to which it is attributed."—Ibid. p. 429.

Important use may also be made of these conceptions of immensity and eternity in stating the argument for the future existence of the soul. For why was the mind of man rendered capable of extending its views in point of time beyond the limits of human transactions, and in point of space, beyond the limits of the visible universe, if all our prospects are to terminate here?—or why was a glimpse of so magnificent a scene disclosed to a being, the period of whose animal existence bears so small a proportion to the vastness of his desires? Surely this conception of the necessary existence of space and time, of immensity and eternity, was not forced continually upon the thoughts of man for no purpose whatever. And to what purpose can we suppose it to be subservient, but to remind those who make a proper use of their reason, of the trifling value of some of those objects we at present pursue, when compared with the scenes on which we may afterwards enter; and to animate us in the pursuit of wisdom and virtue, by affording us the prospect of an *indefinite* progression?[1]

After what I have already said of the argument *a priori*, it will not be expected that I should enter here into a particular illustration of it. Such as wish to examine it with attention may consult Dr. Clarke's work, *On the Being and Attributes of God;* the last edition of Dr. Price's *Review of the Principal Questions and Difficulties in Morals;* and a book published by Dr. Hamilton, late Bishop of Ossory,[2] where, after an historical review of the different forms in which the argument *a priori*

[1] Cicero had plainly the same argument in view when he remarked, "*Nescio quomodo inhæret in mentibus quasi sæculorum quoddam augurium futurorum;* idque in maximis ingeniis altissimisque animis et exsistit maximè, et apparet facillimè."—*Tuscul. Disput.* Lib. I. c. xv.

[2] In the *Bibliotheca Britannica*, published by the late Dr. Watt of Glasgow, I find this work ascribed to Hugh Hamilton, author of *A Treatise of Conic Sections,** which appeared at Dublin in 1758, and which I remember to have admired many years ago for its originality and elegance. If Dr. Watt's information (which is not always to be implicitly relied upon) be in this instance correct, I cannot help saying that, in my opinion, Mr. Hamilton's genius appears to much greater advantage as a geometrician than as a philosopher.

* *De Sectionibus Conicis. Tractatus Geometricus. In quo, ex Natura ipsius Coni, Sectionum Affectiones facillime deducuntur, Methodo Nova.* Dublinii, 1758.

has been stated by preceding writers, he proposes a new one of his own, more clear, (according to him,) and more conclusive.

But whatever opinion be formed upon the argument *a priori*, all parties must allow that the argument *a posteriori* is more level to the comprehension of ordinary men, and more satisfactory to the philosopher himself. Indeed, in inquiries of this sort the presumption is strongly in favour of that mode of reasoning which is the most simple and obvious.

The existence of a Deity, however, does not seem to be an intuitive truth. It requires the exercise of our reasoning powers to present it in its full force to the mind. But the process of reasoning consists only of a single step, and the premises belong to that class of first principles which form an essential part of the human constitution. These premises are *two* in number. The one is, that everything which begins to exist must have a cause. The other, that a combination of means conspiring to a particular end implies intelligence.

CHAPTER II.

OF THE PROOF OF THE EXISTENCE OF THE DEITY A POSTERIORI, [AND IN DETAIL.]

SECTION I.—OF THE FOUNDATIONS OF OUR REASONING FROM THE EFFECT TO THE CAUSE, AND OF THE EVIDENCES OF ACTIVE POWER EXHIBITED IN THE UNIVERSE.

It was before observed, that our knowledge of the course of nature is entirely the result of observation and experiment, and that there is no instance in which we perceive such a connexion between two successive events as might enable us to infer the one from the other as a necessary consequence.

From experience, indeed, we learn that there are many events so conjoined, that the one constantly follows the other. It is possible, however, that this connexion, though a constant one as far as our observation has reached, is not a *necessary* connexion; nay, it is possible, for any thing we know to the contrary, that there may be no necessary connexions among any of the phenomena we see; and if there are any such connexions existing, we may rest assured that we shall never be able to discover them.

With this principle, when stated in general terms, most people I apprehend will now agree. Nor is the principle a new one, (as has been commonly supposed,) and peculiar to Mr. Hume's system. Of this assertion I have produced sufficient proof in a note at the end of the first volume of the *Philosophy of the Human Mind*, where I have quoted various passages from Hobbes, Barrow, Butler, Berkeley, and others, demonstrating clearly that their notions on the subject were precisely

the same with Mr. Hume's.[1] To the list of names there mentioned, perhaps that of Socrates ought to be added, who, as Xenophon tells in the *Memorabilia*, blamed the Sophists for inquiring *τίσιν ἀνάγκαις ἕκαστα γίγνεται τῶν οὐρανίων.* And he adds,—*Ἀλλὰ καὶ τοὺς φροντίζοντας τὰ τοιαῦτα μωραίνοντας ἀπεδείκνυεν.* Afterwards he says,—*Ἐθαύμαζε δ', εἰ μὴ φανερὸν αὐτοῖς ἐστὶν, ὅτι ταῦτα οὐ δυνατόν ἐστιν ἀνθρώποις εὑρεῖν.*[2]

From this view of the subject, with regard to Cause and Effect in physics, Mr. Hume has deduced an objection to the argument *a posteriori* for the existence of the Deity. After having proved that we cannot get the idea of *necessary connexion* from examining the conjunction between any two events, he takes for granted that we have no other idea of cause and effect, than of two *successive* events which are *always conjoined;* that we have therefore no reason to think that any one event in nature is *necessarily* connected with another, or to infer the operation of Power from the changes we observe in the universe.

In consequence of these alarming inferences, a number of Mr. Hume's opponents have been led to call in question the truth of his general principles with respect to the relation of cause and effect in natural philosophy. But it has always appeared to me that the defect of this part of Mr. Hume's system does not lie in his *premises*, but in the *conclusion* which he has deduced from them; and which, I flatter myself, I shall be able to show cannot be inferred from these premises by a legitimate process of reasoning.

Of the objections that have been stated to Mr. Hume's premises some are extremely frivolous. Dr. Beattie has opposed them by some instances. "There are now," says he, "in my view, two contiguous houses, one of which was built last summer, and the other two years ago. By seeing them constantly together for several months, I find that the idea of the one determines my mind to form the idea of the other; so that, according to Mr. Hume's definition, the one house is the cause,

[1] For some curious passages to the same purpose, see *Philosophy of the Human Mind*, Vol. II. Note O, [and Appendix, Art. iv.—*Works*, Vol. III. pp. 389, *seq.*; 417, *seq.*]

[2] Lib. I. cap. i. §§ 11, 13.

and the other the effect."[1] But Dr. Beattie has overlooked one circumstance mentioned by Mr. Hume. That author had evidently in his view *not co-existent objects, but events succeeding each other in the order of time*, for he always ascribes priority to the cause.

The same remark may be made on another instance which Dr. Beattie mentions. "Day and night," says he, "have always been contiguous and successive,—the imagination naturally runs from the idea of the one to that of the other; consequently, according to Mr. Hume's theory, either day is the cause of night, or night the cause of day, just as we consider the one or the other to have been originally prior in time; and its being the one or the other, depends entirely on my imagination."[2] Now, it is evident that this conclusion never can be formed according to Mr. Hume's theory, for he tells us that when two events are conjoined we affix the idea of causation to that event which *happens first in the order of time*. But day and night happening alternately, the one cannot be considered as prior to the other, and therefore it is quite impossible that the idea of causation can be affixed to either.

But taking for granted the truth of Mr. Hume's premises, let us consider the accuracy of his subsequent reasoning.

In order to form a competent judgment on this point, it is necessary to recollect, that, according to his system, "all our ideas are nothing but copies of our impressions; or, in other words, that it is *impossible* for us to *think* of anything which we have not antecedently *felt*, either by our external or internal senses."* Having proved, therefore, that external objects, as they appear to our senses, give us no idea of *power* or of *necessary connexion*, and also that this idea cannot be copied from any internal impression, (that is, cannot be derived from reflection on the operations of our own minds,) he thinks himself warranted to conclude that we have no such idea. "One event," says he, "follows another, but we never observe any

[1] *Essay on Truth.* Second edition, p. 332. [Part II. chap. ii. sect. 3.]

[2] Ibid.

* [*Essays*, Vol. II. *An Inquiry concerning Human Understanding*, sect. vii. *Of the Idea of Necessary Connexion*, Part 1; compare also sect. ii.]

tie between them. They seem *conjoined* but never *connected.* And as we can have no idea of anything which never appeared to our outward sense or inward sentiment, the necessary conclusion seems to be, that we have no idea of connexion or power at all, and that these words are absolutely without any meaning when employed either in philosophical reasonings or common life."*

Are we therefore to reject, as perfectly unintelligible, a word which is to be found in all languages, because it expresses an idea, for the origin of which we cannot account upon a particular philosophical system? Would it not be more reasonable to suspect that the system was not perfectly complete, than that all mankind should have agreed in employing a word which conveys no meaning?

With respect to Mr. Hume's theory concerning the origin of our ideas, it is the less necessary to enter into particular discussions, as it coincides in the main with the doctrine of Locke, to which I have elsewhere stated some objections, which appear to me insurmountable.[1] Upon neither theory is it possible to explain the origin of those simple notions, which are not received immediately by any external sense, or derived from our own consciousness, but which are necessarily formed by the mind while we are exercising our intellectual powers upon their proper objects.

These very slight hints are sufficient to show that we are not entitled to dispute the reality of our idea of Power, because we cannot trace it to any of the senses. The only question is, if it be certain, that we annex any idea to the word *power* different from that of constant succession? The following considerations, among many others, prove that the import of these two expressions is by no means the same.

First, then, it is evident, that, if we had no idea of cause and effect different from that of mere succession, it would appear to us *as* absurd to suppose two events disjoined which we have constantly seen connected, as to suppose a change in external

* [Ibid. Part 2.]

[1] *Philosophy of the Human Mind*, Vol. I. p. 94, *et seq.* Sixth edit. [Chap. I. § iv. *supra*, *Works*, Vol. II. p. 113, *seq.*]

objects to take place without a cause. The fact, however, is, that nobody finds it difficult to conceive that two events which are constantly conjoined *may not* be necessarily connected; whereas it may be safely pronounced to be impossible for a person to bring himself for a moment to believe that *any change* may take place in the *material* universe *without a cause*. I can conceive very easily that the volition in my mind is not the efficient cause of the motions of my hand; but can I conceive that my hand moves without any cause whatever? Nay, I can conceive that no one event in nature is necessarily connected with any other event; but does it therefore follow that I can conceive these events to happen without the operation of a cause? Leibnitz maintained that the volitions of the mind were not the efficient causes of the motions of the body; and compared the connexion between them to that between two clocks so adjusted by an artist that the motions of the one shall always correspond with those of the other. Every person of reflection must acknowledge that, however unwarranted by facts this theory may be, it is still possible it may be true. But if Leibnitz had affirmed not only that there was no connexion between the two clocks, but that the motions in each went on without any cause whatever, his theory would have been not only unsupported by proof, but absurd and inconceivable.

In the *second* place, our experience of the established connexions of physical events is evidently too limited a foundation for our belief that every change must have a cause. Mr. Hume himself, in laying down "the rules by which to judge of causes and effects," observes, in the *first place*, that "Cause and Effect must be contiguous in space and time;" and consequently he apprehended that, according to the general opinion, Matter produces its effects by Impulse alone.[1] If, therefore, every change which had fallen under our notice had been preceded by apparent impulse, experience might have led us to conclude, from observing a change, that a previous impulse had been given; or, according to Mr. Hume's notion of *a cause*, that a cause had

[1] *Treatise of Human Nature*, Vol. I. p. 304. See also p. 136. [Book I. Part iii. Sect. 15; ibid. sect. 2.]

operated to produce this effect. Of the changes, however, which we see, how small a number is preceded by apparent impulse! And yet, in the case of *every* change around us, without exception, we have an irresistible conviction of the operation of some cause. I believe it will be difficult to explain, upon Mr. Hume's principles, how we get this idea of the necessity of a cause in the case of those phenomena in which impulse has apparently no share.

To this we may add, that children at a very early period of life, when their experience is extremely limited, discover an eager curiosity to pry into the causes of the phenomena they observe. Even the attention of the lower animals seems to be roused when they see a body begin to move, or in general any change begin to take place in external objects.

The arguments which are commonly used to prove the necessity of human actions, derive all their plausibility from the general maxim, that *every change requires a cause with which it is necessarily connected.* It is remarkable that this doctrine of the Necessity of the will should form part of the same system with the theory of Cause and Effect which I have now been examining.[1]

The question, however, still recurs, in what manner do we *acquire* the idea of Causation, Power, or Efficiency? But this question, if the foregoing observations be admitted, is com-

[1] The same argument for the Necessity of the will has been very recently repeated with much confidence by the Comte de Laplace in his *Essai Philosophique sur les Probabilités.* "Les évènemens actuels ont avec les précédens une liaison fondée sur le principe évident, qu'une chose ne peut pas commencer d'être, sans une cause qui la produise. Cet axiome, connu sous le nom de *principe de la raison suffisante*, s'étend aux actions même que l'on juge indifférentes. La volonté la plus libre ne peut, sans un motif déterminant, leur donner naissance; car si toutes les circonstances de deux positions étant exactement semblables, elle agissoit dans l'une et s'abstenoit d'agir dans l'autre, son choix seroit un *effet sans cause;** elle seroit alors, dit Leibnitz, le hazard aveugle des Epicuriens."—[P. 5, 2d edit. 1814.]

* The impropriety of this language was long ago pointed out by Mr. Hume. "They are still more frivolous who say that every effect must have a cause, because it is implied in the very idea of effect. Every effect necessarily presupposes a cause, effect being a relative term, of which cause is the co-relative. The true state of the question is, whether every object which begins to exist must owe its existence to a cause?"—*Treatise of Human Nature,* Vol. I. p. 147.—[Book I. Part iii. sect. 3.]

paratively of little consequence, as the doubts which may arise on the subject tend only (without affecting the reality of the idea or notion) to expose the defects of particular philosophical systems.

The most probable account of the matter seems to be, that the idea of Causation or of Power necessarily accompanies the perception of Change in a way somewhat analogous to that in which sensation implies a being who feels, and thought a being who thinks. Is it possible to conceive a person (however limited his experience may be) whose curiosity would not be roused by a *change* taking place in the objects around him? and what is this curiosity but an anxiety to know the *cause* of the *effect?* The mere perception of *change*, therefore, in the material universe, seems sufficient to introduce to the mind the ideas of *cause* and *effect*, and to impress us with a belief that this change *could not* have taken place unless there had been some *cause* for it. Such, I apprehend, would be the conclusion of a man wholly destitute of experience, and who was even ignorant of his own power to move at will the members of his body.

It must indeed be acknowledged, that, after having had experience of our own *power*, we come to associate the idea of *force*, or of an animal *nisus*, with that of *cause;* and hence some have been led to suppose that our only idea of *cause* is derived from our bodily exertions. Hence, too, it is that in natural philosophy our language frequently bears a reference to our own sensations. The ideas of *cause*, however, and of *power*, are more general than that of *force*, and might have been acquired although we had never been conscious of any bodily exertion whatever. There is surely no impropriety in saying that the mind has *power* over the train of its ideas, and over its various faculties, as well as over the members of the body.

These observations coincide with the opinion of Dr. Reid, who long ago remarked, that, by the constitution of the mind, a beginning of existence, or any change in nature, suggests to us the notion of a cause, and compels our belief of its existence.*

* [*Intellectual Powers*, Essay VI. chap. vi.—*Works*, p. 455, *seq.*—*Active Powers*, Essay I. chap. iv.—*Works*, p. 521, *seq.*]

Dr. Price also, in treating of the origin of our ideas,[1] has anticipated me in part of the foregoing doctrine. "What we observe," says he, "by our external senses, is properly no more than that one thing *follows* another, or the *constant conjunction* of certain events. That one thing is the *cause* of another, or *produces* it by its efficacy and operation, we never see. Our certainty that every new event requires some cause depends not at all on experience, no more than our certainty of any other the most obvious subject of intuition. In the idea of every *change* is included that of its being an *effect*."[2]

Upon[3] this part of the subject, indeed, I write with a good deal of diffidence, because the opinion which I have now stated differs considerably from that of some very ingenious and candid persons with whom I have conversed; who think not only that it is from our own voluntary exertions that our *first* ideas of cause and power are derived, but that we have no idea whatever of these which is not borrowed by analogy from our own consciousness.

One of my friends has amused himself with conceiving in what manner a man, who had never had experience of any animal exertion, would reason concerning the phenomena of the material world, and has been led to apprehend that he would consider the different events he saw merely as *antece-*

[1] See his *Review of the Principal Questions in Morals.*—[Chap. I. sect. ii. p. 33, orig. edit.]

[2] I do not know how to reconcile this passage from Price with another which follows a few pages after. "While we only see one thing constantly following another, without perceiving the real dependence and connexion, we are necessarily dissatisfied, and feel a state of mind very different from that entire acquiescence which we experience upon considering Sir Isaac Newton's laws of motion, or any other instances and facts in which we see the necessary connexion and truth."—[Ibidem, p. 38.]

[3] This paragraph, and some of the following pages, are copied verbatim from an *Essay on the Idea of Cause and Effect, and on the object of Natural Philosophy*, which the author read before the Royal Society of Edinburgh in the year 1784. The original copy, in the hand-writing of a friend still alive, is at present in my possession. Various other paragraphs in this section are transcribed with some slight alterations from the same manuscript.—See *Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh*, Vol. I. p. 21.

dents and *consequents*, without applying to the former in any instance the idea of *causation*.[1]

I have already hinted that my own opinion is different from this; but I perfectly agree with my friend in thinking that this conclusion does not lead the way to any sceptical consequences. To say that our ideas of Power and Cause are derived from our own voluntary exertions, does not affect the reality of these ideas. And although we should grant that a man, who had never been conscious of any voluntary exertion, could never be led to conceive these ideas, or to comprehend the argument for the existence of a Deity, still that argument would apply *universally to our species*, for without such a consciousness no individual ever did, or could exist. Whatever ideas, whatever principles we are necessarily led to acquire by the circumstances in which we are placed, and by the exercise of those faculties which are essential to our preservation, are to be considered as parts of human nature, no less than those which are implanted in the mind at its first formation.

I am aware that this will not be considered by some as a complete answer to the objection; and it will still be urged that, if our only ideas of Cause and Power be derived from our own voluntary exertions, the argument for the existence of a Deity rests merely on an arbitrary association of ideas. We have found from experience that our voluntary exertions are followed by certain changes in the state of external objects, and are accordingly led to suppose, when we see other changes take place, that they have been preceded by some voluntary exertions analogous to those of which we are conscious. I cannot, however, help being of opinion, that the principle which leads us to consider a cause as necessary to produce a *change* in material things, is of a kind very different from the association of ideas. The changes which we and the whole human race are able to produce in the state of terrestrial objects are nothing, either in point of number or magnitude, in comparison of those which we see going on both in the earth and heavens, and I may add in our own bodies, and over which we

[1] I alluded here to my late excellent and illustrious friend Mr. Playfair.

have no influence. Whence is it then that we connect with *every* change we see, the idea of a cause? From the similarity between our own appearance and that of other men, and from the striking analogy between the human race and other animals, I shall admit that the association of ideas alone might lead us to connect the idea of voluntary exertion with animal motion. But whence is it that we associate the idea of a cause with the fall of a stone, with the ebbing and flowing of the sea, or with the motion of the planets? It will be said that, having learned from our own consciousness and experience the connexion between voluntary exertion and motion, we have recourse to the supposition of some analogous power or force to *account* for every motion we see. But what is it that leads us to think of *accounting* for these motions? Nothing, I apprehend, but that law of our nature which leads us to infer the existence of a cause wherever a change is perceived.

Some authors have compared this law of our nature to our instinctive interpretation of natural signs.[1] As we *perceive* the passions and emotions in the minds of others by means of their looks and gestures, so it has been apprehended that every change we observe is accompanied with a perception of *power* or *cause*. This comparison will not be the less just, although we should proceed on the supposition that our first ideas of power and cause are derived from our own voluntary exertions; for the case is perfectly analogous with respect to the natural expressions of passion and emotion. No modification of countenance could convey the idea of *rage* to a man who had never been conscious of that passion; but after having acquired the idea of this passion from his own consciousness, he is able instinctively to interpret its natural expression.

Although, however, there may be some foundation for the foregoing comparison, it is necessary to remark, that our association of the ideas of *change* and *cause* is of a much more intimate and *indissoluble* nature than our association of any natural sign with the idea signified. Every person must perceive, upon the slightest reflection, that the connexion between

[1] Reid's *Inquiry*, 3d edit. pp. 88, 89.—[Chap. V. sect. iii.—*Works*, p. 122.]

any sign and the thing signified, *may be* merely an arbitrary connexion adapted to our particular constitution. Even in the case of Hardness we can discover no connexion whatever between the external quality and the sensation which suggests it. But, in the case of every change in the state of external objects, or of our own bodies, we not only connect with this particular change the idea of some Cause, but we have an irresistible conviction of the *necessity* of a cause. Something not unlike to this takes place with respect to our ideas of Space and Time. We acquire both originally from our perceptions; but having once acquired them, we have an irresistible conviction that both space and time are necessary and self-existent.

Having endeavoured to vindicate against the objections of Mr. Hume the reality of our notion of Power or Efficiency, I proceed to examine more particularly the foundation of our belief, that *every thing that begins to exist must have a cause.* Is this belief founded on *abstract reasoning*, or is it the result of *experience*, or is it an *intuitive judgment?*

A variety of attempts have been made to demonstrate the truth of this principle from some general metaphysical axioms; in particular by Hobbes, Clarke, and Locke. Mr. Hume, in his *Treatise of Human Nature*, has examined each of their demonstrations, and has shown very clearly that they all take for granted the thing to be proved.*

Other philosophers have thought that the principle may be proved by induction, from the particular instances that have fallen under our experience, as we infer from particular facts that cold freezes water, that heat turns it into steam, and that all bodies gravitate to each other.

But this opinion will not bear examination; for the thing to be proved is not a contingent but a necessary truth. "It is not, [says Reid,†] that things which begin to exist commonly have a cause; nor even that they have always been found to have a cause as far as our experience has reached,—but that they *must* have a cause, and that the contrary supposition implies an impossibi-

* [Book I. Part iii. sect. 3, pp. 144-148, orig. ed. See also Reid, *Intellectual Powers*, Ess. VI. ch. vi.—*Works*, p. 455.]

† [Compare Ibid.]

lity."[1] Now it is manifest that no induction, how extensive soever, can ever lead to the discovery of a *necessary* truth; for experience only informs us of what is, or what has been, not of what must necessarily be; and the evidence of the conclusion must be of the same nature with that of the premises.

But abstracting from this consideration, and viewing this principle merely as a contingent truth, how is it possible to account, by means of experience, for our belief, that *every* change in the state of the universe is actually produced by a cause? In every case in which experience informs us that two things are connected, both of them must have fallen under our observation. But the causes of by far the greater number of phenomena we see are perfectly unknown to us, and therefore we never could learn from experience whether they have causes or not. The only instance in which we have any immediate knowledge of an efficient cause, is in the consciousness we have of our own voluntary actions, and surely this experience is not sufficient to account for the confidence with which we form the general conclusion.

From the foregoing observations we may infer that this principle is not founded on *experience;* and it has been shown clearly by Mr. Hume that it is not *demonstrable* by abstract

[1] The very acute and ingenious Dr. Campbell, although he plainly leaned to the supposition that our idea of causation is drawn from experience, acknowledges, nevertheless, that it *seems* to involve the idea of *necessary* connexion. "In the proposition whatever hath a beginning hath a cause, we intuitively conclude from the existence of one thing the existence of another. This proposition, however, so far differs, in my apprehension, from others of the same order, that I cannot avoid considering the opposite assertion as not only false, but contradictory; *but I do not pretend to explain the ground of this difference.*" —*Philosophy of Rhetoric*, Vol. I. pp. 114, 115.—[Orig. ed. Book I. chap. v. Part 3.] From the last clause it may be inferred, that Dr. Campbell thought something was still wanting for the complete elucidation of this subject.

Even some of the philosophers who most confidently reject the application of the word *necessary* to this proposition, admit that it involves the idea of *invariable* connexion. I should be glad to be informed what distinction they make between the words invariable and necessary. What idea do we annex to the phrase *necessary conjunction*, but a conjunction which *cannot* be varied? Experience (it is plain) can only inform us that a conjunction has been found *unvaried* as far as it has been hitherto observed, but how do we infer from this that it is an *invariable* conjunction?

reasoning,—we must therefore conclude that it is either a prejudice or an *intuitive* judgment.

That it is not a prejudice may be safely inferred from the universal consent of mankind, both learned and unlearned. Mr. Hume was the first person who called it in question, and even he frequently relapses unawares into the common conviction. Thus in his *Treatise of Human Nature:* "As to those Impressions which arise from the Senses, their *ultimate cause* is, in my opinion, perfectly inexplicable by human reason; and it will always be impossible to decide with certainty whether they arise immediately from the object, or are produced by the creative power of the mind, or are derived from the author of our being."*

Upon a review of the observations and reasonings already stated in the course of this inquiry, it can scarcely fail to occur to an attentive reader, that the word *cause* is used both by philosophers and the vulgar in *two* senses, which are widely different. When it is said that every change in nature indicates the operation of a cause, the word *cause* expresses something which is supposed to be *necessarily connected* with the change, and without which it could not have happened. This may be called the *metaphysical* meaning of the word, and such causes may be called *Metaphysical* or *Efficient causes.*

In natural philosophy, however, when we speak of one thing being the cause of another, all that we mean is, that the two are *constantly conjoined*, so that when we see the one we may expect the other. These conjunctions we learn from experience alone, and without an acquaintance with them we could not accommodate our conduct to the established course of nature. The causes which are the objects of our investigation in *natural* philosophy may, for the sake of distinction, be called *Physical causes.*[1]

* [Book I. Part iii. sect. 5, p. 151, orig. ed.]

[1] In a respectable publication, entitled *Introduction to an Analysis of the Principles of Natural Philosophy*, by Dr. Matthew Young of Dublin, (Robinsons, London, 1800,) I find the following sentence, the meaning of which I am quite unable to conjecture.

"Causes are either Experimental or Rational; experiment is the only standard of experimental causes; perception

In the *Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind*,[1] I have endeavoured to trace the origin of those prejudices which have led philosophers, in every age, to confound together Efficient and Physical causes; and I have remarked the extensive influence which this inaccurate employment of terms has had on their physical systems. The ancients, in particular, seem universally to have ascribed a real efficiency to physical causes; and the same supposition is implied in those expressions, so frequently in use among the moderns, of "a chain of causes and effects, or of necessary connexions existing among physical events."[2] Mr. Hume had, I think, great merit in showing, that the province of the natural philosopher is not to trace necessary connexions, but constant conjunctions; or, in other words, to trace the general laws which regulate the order of the universe. But in stating this doctrine, he unfortunately went into the opposite extreme; and as the ancients had vitiated natural philosophy by busying themselves about efficient causes, so Mr. Hume's argument tends, though perhaps unintentionally on his part, to subvert the foundations of natural religion, by affirming that physical causes are the only ones we know, and that the words Power, Efficiency, and Necessary Connexion, convey no meaning.

If this important distinction between Efficient and Physical causes be kept steadily in view, Mr. Hume's doctrine concerning the relation of Cause and Effect in physics, so far from lead-

of the necessary connexion of events is the standard of rational causes." In illustration of this distinction, he refers to an Essay by R. Young, *On the Mechanism of Nature*.

[1] Vol. I. chap. i. sect. 2.—[*Supra*, p. 96, *seq.*]

[2] Even in the present times, some of the most sagacious of Bacon's followers show a disposition to relapse into the figurative language of the multitude. "The chain of Natural Causes," says Dr. Reid, "has, not unfitly, been compared to a chain hanging down from Heaven; a link that is discovered supports the links below it, but it must itself be supported; and that which supports it must be supported, until we come to the first link, which is supported by the Throne of the Almighty."—(*Essays on the Intellectual Powers*, 4to ed. p. 115.—[Essay II. chap. vi.—*Works*, p. 261.]) It is difficult to reconcile the approbation here bestowed on the above similitude, with the excellent and profound remarks on the relation of Cause and Effect, which occur in other parts of Dr. Reid's Works. See *Essays on the Active Powers*, p. 44, and pp. 286-288.—[Essay I. chap. vi., Essay IV. chap. iii. —*Works*, pp. 526, 606, 607.] For additional remarks on the same subject, see *Philosophy of the Human Mind*, Vol. II. Note N.

ing to atheism, is more favourable to religious belief than the common inaccurate conceptions entertained on that subject; as it keeps the Deity always in view, not only as the first, but as the constantly operating efficient cause in the material world, (either immediately, or by means of some intelligent instruments,) and as the great connecting principle among all the various phenomena which we observe.[1]

As to Mr. Hume's metaphysical subtleties on the idea of Causation, it seems to me perfectly unnecessary to enlarge farther on the argument, after the solution which he has himself suggested of the doubts and difficulties which have been now under our consideration. This solution, which is, in my opinion, eminently philosophical and beautiful, and which is more satisfactory to my mind than anything advanced by his adversaries in opposition to his reasonings, I shall transcribe in Mr. Hume's own words.

"Here, then, is a kind of pre-established harmony between the course of nature and the succession of our ideas; and though the *powers and forces* by which the former is governed be wholly unknown to us, yet our thoughts and conceptions have still, we find, gone on in the same train with the other works of nature. Custom is that principle by which this correspondence has been effected; so necessary to the subsistence of our species, and the regulation of our conduct in every circumstance and occurrence of human life. Had not the presence of an object instantly excited the idea of those objects commonly conjoined with it, all our knowledge must have been limited to the narrow sphere of our memory and senses; and we should never have been able to adjust means to ends, or employ our natural powers, either to the producing of good or avoiding evil. Those who delight in the discovery and contemplation of final causes, have here ample subject to employ their wonder and admiration.

[1] This was, in fact, the very conclusion which Malebranche drew from premises strikingly similar to those of Mr. Hume. The great error of Malebranche in this inquiry, was his extending his theory of *Occasional Causes* from the material to the moral world. For some remarks upon the important consequences which follow from this error, see *First Dissertation prefixed to the Supplement to the Encyclopædia Britannica*, Part II. p. 170.—[*Works*, vol. i. p. 430.]

"I shall add, for a farther confirmation of the foregoing theory, that as this operation of the mind by which we infer like effects from like causes, and *vice versa*, is so essential to the existence of all human creatures, it is not probable that it could be trusted to the fallacious deductions of our reason, which is slow in its operations; appears not in any degree during the first years of infancy; and at best is, in every age and period of human life, extremely liable to error and mistake. It is more conformable to the ORDINARY WISDOM OF NATURE to secure so necessary an act of the mind by some *instinct* or mechanical tendency, which may be infallible in its operations; may discover itself at the first appearance of life and thought; and may be independent of all the laboured deductions of the understanding. As nature has taught us the use of our limbs without giving us the knowledge of the muscles and nerves by which they are actuated, so has she implanted in us an *instinct* which carries forward the thoughts in a correspondent course to that which she has established among external objects, though we are ignorant of those *powers* and *forces* on which this regular course and succession of objects totally depend."[1]

I had just observed, before I introduced the foregoing quotation, that if the distinction between *Efficient* and *Physical causes* be admitted, Mr. Hume's doctrine with respect to the relation between Cause and Effect in natural philosophy, is more favourable to theism than the common inaccurate conceptions which are entertained concerning that relation, as it keeps the Deity always in view as the constantly operating efficient cause in the material world, and as the great connecting principle among all its various phenomena.[2]

[1] See in the last edition of Mr. Hume's *Philosophical Essays*, published during his own lifetime, the two sections entitled *Sceptical Doubts concerning the Operations of the Understanding, and Sceptical Solution of these Doubts.*—[*Inquiry concerning Human Understanding*, sect. v. at end.]

[2] As a proof of the confusion we are liable to run into in our speculations about *causes*, without a due attention to the ambiguity of the word cause, I shall transcribe a few sentences from Mr. Burke's *Inquiry into the Sublime and Beautiful;* in which he has explicitly assigned to the phrase *efficient cause* the same meaning I annex to the phrase *physical cause*. In consequence of this, he

But perhaps it may be thought by some that this very conclusion is a sufficient refutation of the supposition from which it is inferred; for how is it possible to conceive that all the events which are constantly taking place in the different parts of the material universe are the immediate effects of the Divine agency?

For my own part, I have no scruple to admit this conclusion in all its extent; for I cannot perceive any absurdity that it involves; and I am happy to find that it is agreeable to the sentiments of some of our best and soundest philosophers.

has been led to represent it as the business of natural philosophy to investigate *efficient causes*, while, at the same time, he acknowledges that *ultimate causes* are placed beyond the reach of our faculties.

"When I say I intend to inquire into the *efficient cause* of sublimity and beauty, I would not be understood to say that I can come to the *ultimate cause*. . . . . That great chain of causes which links one to another, even to the throne of God himself, can never be unravelled by any industry of ours. When we go but one step beyond the immediately sensible qualities of things, we go out of our depth. All we do after is but a faint struggle, that shows we are in an element which does not belong to us. So that when I speak of cause and efficient cause, I only mean certain affections of the mind that cause certain changes in the body; or certain powers and properties in bodies that *work* a change in the mind. As if I were to explain the motion of a body falling to the ground, I would say it was caused by gravity, and I would endeavour to show after what manner this power operated, without attempting to show *why* it operated in this manner; or if I were to explain the effects of bodies striking one another by the common laws of percussion, I should not endeavour to explain *how* motion itself is communicated."—[Part IV. sect. i.]

Is it not a more simple and distinct phraseology to give to those causes which the natural philosopher investigates the name of *Physical*, and to apply the epithet *Efficient* (agreeably to its literal import) to what Burke calls *ultimate* causes?

When I first proposed (more than forty years ago) this phraseology to the late Dr. Reid, he objected to it that Newton, to whose language he was superstitiously attached, had used the phrases *physical causes* and *efficient causes* as synonymous. If this be the fact, I have no scruple to say, that Newton has been guilty of indefinite and ambiguous expression; and that the observation only furnishes an additional argument in favour of those distinctive epithets I wish to introduce. Had my excellent friend adopted my suggestion, I cannot help thinking that he would have reconciled some apparent inconsistencies which occur in his later publications, and obviated some of the cavils with which he has been assailed by his not always candid opponents.

For various other observations which appear to myself not unimportant on the subject of this section, I beg leave to refer to the Second Volume of the *Philosophy of the Human Mind*, Chap. IV. sect. 1.—[*Supra*, p. 231, *seq.*]

"All things," says Dr. Clarke,* "that are done in the world are done either immediately by God himself, or by created intelligent beings. *Matter* being evidently not capable of any laws or powers whatsoever, any more than it is capable of intelligence, excepting only this *one* negative power, that every part of it will of itself always and *necessarily* continue in that state, whether of rest or motion, wherein it at present is. So that all those things which we commonly say are the effects of the natural powers of matter and laws of motion, of gravitation, attraction, or the like, are indeed (if we will speak strictly and properly) the *effects of God's acting upon matter continually and every moment*, either immediately by himself, or mediately by some created intelligent beings. . . . Consequently, there is no such thing as what we commonly call the *course of nature*, or the *power of nature*. The course of nature, truly and properly speaking, is nothing else but the will of God producing certain effects in a continued, regular, constant, and uniform manner; which course or manner of acting being in every moment perfectly *arbitrary*, is as easy to be *altered* at any time as to be preserved."[1]

Although, however, my opinion on this subject perfectly coincides with that of Dr. Clarke, I must own that it has not hitherto been the prevailing opinion among the learned, either of ancient or of modern times. Many of the most celebrated theories we meet with in the history both of physics and of

* [*The Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion*, Prop. xiv.—*Works*, folio edit. Vol. II. p. 697. See other passages to the same effect quoted above in *Works*, Vol. III. p. 418, *seq.*]

[1] In speaking of the theory of Occasional Causes, Mr. Hume has committed an historical mistake, which I shall take this opportunity to correct. "Malebranche," he observes, "and other Cartesians, made the doctrine of the universal and sole efficacy of the Deity the foundation of all their philosophy. *It had, however, no authority in England.* Locke, *Clarke*, and Cudworth, never so much as take notice of it, but suppose all along that matter has a real, though subordinate and derived power."—*Essays*, Vol. II. p. 475. Edition of 1784.—[Note D; p. 548, ed. 1788.]

Mr. Hume was probably led to connect, in this last sentence, the name of Clarke with those of Locke and Cudworth, by taking for granted that his metaphysical opinions agreed exactly with those commonly ascribed to Sir Isaac Newton. The above quotation proves that, in fact, his opinion, in so far as *matter* is concerned, was the same with that of Malebranche.

metaphysics, have taken their rise from the zeal of philosophers to elude this very conclusion, which appeared to them too extravagant to merit a particular refutation. It was this idea which gave birth to the scheme of Materialism; to the Plastic Nature of Cudworth; to the Mechanical Theories of the Universe proposed by Descartes and Leibnitz; and to various others equally gratuitous and not less extravagant. As these theories are not yet entirely abandoned by philosophers, a slight review of the most remarkable may be supposed necessary for the complete illustration of this subject; and I shall accordingly allot for that purpose a Note at the end of this volume.[1]

The different hypotheses to which I have now alluded have been adopted by ingenious men in preference to the simple and sublime doctrine which supposes the order of the universe to be not only at first established, but every moment maintained by the incessant agency of one supreme mind,—a doctrine against which no objection can be stated, but what is founded on prejudices resulting from our own imperfections. How far, indeed, the events we see are actually produced by the immediate hand of God, or how far he may avail himself of the instrumentality of subordinate intelligences, it is impossible for us to determine; but of this we may rest assured, that when he chooses to communicate a certain measure of power to any of his creatures, and employs their operation to accomplish the ends of his providence, it is not because he is himself incompetent to the magnitude, or to the multiplicity of the effects which take place in the universe. And, therefore, the consideration of these effects, how astonishing soever they may be, furnishes no argument in favour of the theories which have already been enumerated.

How powerfully the speculations of philosophers on this subject have been influenced by prejudices suggested by the analogy of human nature, appears from various passages both in ancient and modern authors.

In the seventh chapter of the treatise *De Mundo*, ascribed

[1] See Note A.

to Aristotle, the author represents it as unbecoming the *dignity* of the Supreme Being, *αὐτουργεῖν ἅπαντα*, "to set his hand to every thing."—"If it were not congruous in respect of the state and majesty of Xerxes, the great king of Persia, that he should condescend to do all the meanest offices himself, much less can this be thought suitable in respect of God." Even Mr. Boyle, one of the profoundest, and one of the most pious of our English philosophers, seems to have considered it as derogating from the beauty and perfection of the universe, to suppose that the Divine agency is constantly necessary to preserve it in order, or that he is obliged to employ subordinate intelligences to supply the defects of his mechanism. "It seems manifest enough," according to him, "that whatsoever is done in the world, at least where the rational soul intervenes not, is really effected by corporeal causes and agents, according to the laws settled by the Omniscient Author of things." And elsewhere he observes, "That as it more recommends the skill of an engineer to contrive an elaborate engine, so as that there need nothing to reach his ends in it but the contrivance of parts void of understanding, than if it were necessary that ever and anon a discreet servant should be employed to concur notably to the operations of this or that part, or to hinder the engine from being out of order, so it more sets off the wisdom of God in the fabric of the universe, that he can make so vast a machine perform all those many things which he designed it should, by the mere contrivance of brute matter managed by certain laws of motion, and upheld by his ordinary and general concourse, than if he employed from time to time an intelligent overseer to regulate and control the motion of the parts."[1]—"What may be the opinion of others," says Lord Kames, "with respect to this argument of Mr. Boyle, I cannot say, but to me it is perfectly conclusive. Considering this universe as a great machine, the workmanship of an intelligent cause, I cannot avoid thinking it the more complete the less mending or interposition it requires. The perfection of every piece of workmanship, human and divine, consists in its answering the

[1] *Inquiry into the Vulgar Notion of Nature.*

designed purpose, without bestowing farther labour upon it."[1]

The notions of the ancient Epicureans concerning the happiness of the Deity, which they thought could not fail to be impaired by the incessant cares and the unremitted exertions of a superintending Providence, plainly took their rise from the same source. They are beautifully expressed in the following verses of *Lucretius*, where, by the way, he has artfully blended various other topics of sceptical declamation not very consistent with each other, nor with that just now mentioned.

"Nam (proh sancta Deûm tranquilla pectora pace,
Quæ placidum degunt ævum, vitamque serenam!)
Quis regere immensi summam, quis habere profundi
Indu manu validas potis est moderanter habenas?
Quis pariter cœlos omneis convertere? et omneis
Ignibus ætheriis terras suffire feraceis?
Omnibus inque locis esse omni tempore præsto?
Nubibus ut tenebras faciat, cœlique serena
Concutiat sonitu? tum fulmina mittat, et ædeis
Sæpe suas disturbet, et in deserta recedens
Sæviat exercens telum, quod sæpe nocenteis
Præterit, exanimatque indignos inque merenteis?"[2]

The logical inconsistency of this passage (the poetical merit of which cannot be too much admired) is sufficiently obvious. For what is it that constitutes the astonishing sublimity of the description? What but the magnitude and the multiplicity of those physical changes which the poet represents as every moment exhibited to our view? And it is from this very magnitude and multiplicity in the phenomena that he infers the impossibility of their being produced by God; first, because such an exertion would disturb the tranquillity of his repose; and secondly, because it exceeds the limits of his power. Surely the *greater the change*, the more strongly does it evince the necessity of a cause; nor is it easy to conceive a more extra-

[1] *Essay on the Laws of Motion*, published in the *Essays, Physical and Literary*, of the Philosophical Society of Edinburgh.

[2] *Lucretius*, Lib. II. 1092.

ordinary inference, than to deny that the cause exists, because in degree it passes the bounds of our comprehension.

If the power of God be unequal to the accomplishment of all these wonders, what other name shall we give to the mysterious energy from which they proceed? Grant only the reality of this *energy* or *active power*, and you grant the necessity of *mind* to account for the phenomena of the universe. And farther than this I do not push our conclusions in this part of the argument.[1]

How much more philosophical than the lines just quoted from Lucretius, I may add how much more sublime, is the well-known passage of our English poet!

> "All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
> Whose body Nature is, and God the soul;
> That changed through all, and yet in all the same,
> Great in the earth as in the ethereal frame,
> Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,
> Glows in the stars, and blossoms in the trees;
> Lives through all life, extends through all extent,
> Spreads undivided, operates unspent."*

[1] Even Horace, in his graver moments, bestows on the Epicurean system the title of a *mad philosophy*, and acknowledges its effects in unsettling his own mind. It is remarkable that he ascribes the revival of his old Stoical impressions to some of those phenomena of nature from which Lucretius draws an opposite conclusion.

> "Parcus Deorum cultor et infrequens,
> INSANIENTIS DUM SAPIENTIÆ
> CONSULTUS ERRO: nunc retrorsum
> Vela dare, atque iterare cursus
> Cogor relictos. Namque Diespiter
> Igni corusco nubila dividens
> Plerumque, *per purum tonantes*
> *Egit equos volucremque currum*;
> Quo bruta tellus et vaga flumina,
> Quo Styx," &c. &c.
>
> *Carm.* Lib. I. Ode XXXIV.

This ode has been considered by Dacier and other critics as an ironical *jeu d'esprit* levelled against the Stoical doctrine of Providence. I am glad to find that Dr. Copleston, (a very high authority,) in his elegant and philosophical Prelections on Poetry, pronounces it to be an ode "Sincero animi ardore et summa erga Deum pietate insignis."—*Prælectiones Academicæ Oxonii Habitæ* ab Edvardo Copleston, S. T. B., p. 278.

If (according to the very happy conjecture of the Abbé Gagliani) this ode is supposed to be merely the introduction to the following one, *O Diva gratum quæ regis Antium*, this union of the two odes will be found to bestow on both much additional sublimity and beauty. See the *Commentaires Inédits sur Horace*, published in the second volume of the *Mélanges de Littérature* of M. Suard: Paris, 1804.—A spirited translation of the two odes thus combined may be found in the *Lycée* of La Harpe, Vol. II. p. 358, *et seq.*

* [Pope's *Essay on Man*, Ep. i. 267.]

This passage (as Dr. Joseph Warton has remarked) bears a very striking analogy to a noble one in the old Orphic verses, quoted in the Treatise *Περὶ Κόσμου,* ascribed to Aristotle;[1] and it is not a little curious that the same ideas occur in some specimens of Hindoo poetry translated by Sir W. Jones, more particularly in the *Hymn to Narrayna, or the Spirit of God,* taken (as he informs us) from the writings of their ancient authors.

> "Omniscient Spirit, whose all-ruling power
> Bids from each sense bright emanations beam,
> Glows in the rainbow, sparkles in the stream," &c. &c. &c.[2]

[1] "The learned have been much divided in their opinions concerning this piece." See Warton's *Essay on the Writings and Genius of Pope*, Vol. II. p. 168, and the authors there cited.

Dr. Warton's own opinion is, "that the Treatise *De Mundo ought* to be ascribed to Aristotle, notwithstanding the different form of its composition."—(Ibid.) But he gives no reason for thinking so.

The learned Meiners (*Historia Doctrinæ de Vero Deo*) decides with confidence that Aristotle was not the author of it, and states particularly the grounds of this decision. That this was also the opinion of Dr. Parr will be seen from Note B.

[2] The lines above quoted from Pope have been censured by some writers as savouring of *Spinozism;* and the same censure has been extended to various passages in the *Seasons* of Thomson, particularly to the hymn at the end. I suspect strongly that the authors of this criticism have been but slightly acquainted with Spinoza's writings, otherwise they would never have confounded a system, which goes to the complete annihilation of every religious sentiment, with a doctrine which (although somewhat approaching to it in phraseology) has plainly originated in feelings of deep, if not of mystical devotion. The former tends to explain away the existence of God, by identifying him with matter; the latter to give life and expression to matter, by representing every object as full of God.

The same mode of speaking occurs frequently in the Sacred Writings, as when it is said that "in God we live, and move, and have our being." It is thus also that thunder is called his voice, the wind his breath, and the tempest the blast of his nostrils. Upon a subject of this nature, it is impossible to express ourselves in a language which is not more or less metaphorical; but the import of these metaphors must be collected from the scope and spirit of the reasonings with which they are connected. The theory of the *Anima Mundi,* how absurd and dangerous soever, when pushed to its utmost logical consequences, is certainly suggested by one of the most obvious and natural of all analogies—that of our own frame; and therefore it is but fair to put the most favourable construction possible on the views of those who first adopted it. To compare it to the *Pantheism* of Spinoza and his followers, betrays a disposition to discredit the noblest passages in the heathen moralists, and may perhaps lead to other inferences, of which *some* of the writers who have given

How far, indeed, the doctrine expressed in these lines is agreeable to truth, (at least in so far as it involves the supposition of the *unity* of God,) we are not yet warranted by any of the reasonings I have stated to pronounce. I would only at present remark the *simplicity* and the *sublimity* of the doctrine,—two recommendations which, on a subject of this nature, furnish no inconsiderable presumptions that the doctrine is true. For how is it possible to conceive that the limited powers of man are able to imagine an order of things more simple and sublime than what exists in reality? Mr. Boyle, indeed, in the passage formerly quoted from him, represents the supposition of God's incessant agency as detracting from the perfection and beauty of the universe, and appeals to those principles on which we judge of the skill and ingenuity displayed in the structure of a machine. But the illustration is by no means apposite. The intention of a machine is to save labour, and therefore the less frequently the interposition of the artist is necessary, the more completely does the machine accomplish the end for which it was made. These ideas surely do not apply to the works of the Almighty. The multiplicity of his operations neither distracts his attention nor exhausts his power; nor can we suppose him reduced to the necessity of abridging their number by calling mechanism to his aid, without imputing to him the imperfections which mark our own circumscribed faculties and dependent condition.

SECT. II.—OF THE ARGUMENT FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD FROM FINAL CAUSES.*

Having treated at considerable length of the foundations of our reasoning from the Effect to the Cause, and of the evidences

countenance to this comparison are not aware.

"Estne Dei sedes nisi terra, et pontus, et aër,
Et cœlum, et virtus? Superos quid quærimus ultra?
Jupiter est quodcunque vides, quocunque moveris."

I pity the man who in these lines can perceive anything approaching to Atheism.—See *Dissertation prefixed to the Supplement to the Encyclopædia Britannica*, Part II. pp. 76, 77.—[*Supra*, *Works*, Vol. I. pp. 303-305.]

* [See *supra*, *Elements*, &c., Vol. II. chap. iv. sect. 6, pp. 335-357.]

of Active Power exhibited in the universe, I proceed now to illustrate that principle of our nature which leads us to apprehend intelligence or design when we see a variety of means conspiring to a particular end. In examining this part of our constitution, my object is similar to what I had in view in the speculations in which we have last been engaged, not to bring to light any new or abstruse conclusion, but to vindicate against the cavils of sceptics, a mode of reasoning that is equally familiar to the philosopher and the vulgar, and which is not more intimately connected with our religious belief than with our rational conduct in the common business of life. What this mode of reasoning is will be best explained by a few examples:—And for this purpose I shall avail myself of the evidences for the existence of God which Socrates is said to have appealed to in his conversation on this subject with Aristodemus, as it is related with an almost divine simplicity in the *Memorabilia* of Xenophon.[1]

"'Tell me, Aristodemus, is there any man whom you admire on account of his merit?'

"Aristodemus having answered, '*many*;'—'name some of them, I pray you.'

"'I admire,' said Aristodemus, 'Homer for his Epic Poetry; Melanippides for his Dithyrambics; Sophocles for Tragedy; Polycletes for Statuary; and Zeuxis for Painting.'

"'But which seems to you most worthy of admiration, Aristodemus,—the artist who forms Images void of Motion and Intelligence, or one who hath the skill to produce animals that are endued not only with activity, but understanding?'

"'The *latter*, there can be no doubt,' replied Aristodemus,

[1] "Je ne sais s'il y a aucune preuve métaphysique plus frappante, et qui parle plus fortement à l'homme, que cet ordre admirable qui règne dans le monde; et s'il jamais il y a eu un plus bel argument que ce verset, *Cœli enarrant Gloriam Dei*. Aussi vous voyez, que Newton n'en apporte point d'autre à la fin de son *Optique* et de ses *Principes*. Il ne trouvoit point de raisonnement plus convainquant et plus beau en faveur de la Divinité que celui de Platon, qui fait dire à un de ses interlocuteurs, 'Vous jugez que j'ai une âme intelligente parceque vous appercevez de l'ordre dans mes paroles et dans mes actions, jugez donc en voyant l'ordre de ce monde qu'il y a une âme souverainement intelligente.'" — Voltaire, *Elémens de Philosophie*, Chap. I. De Dieu.

'provided the production was not the effect of *chance*, but of wisdom and contrivance.'

"'But since there are many things, some of which we can easily see the *use* of, while we cannot say of others, to what purpose they were produced,—which of these, Aristodemus, do you suppose the work of wisdom?'

"'It should seem the most reasonable to affirm it of those whose fitness and utility are so evidently apparent.'

"'But it is evidently apparent, that He who at the beginning made man, endued him with Senses *because* they were *good* for him,—eyes wherewith to behold whatever was visible, and ears to hear whatever was to be heard. For say, Aristodemus, to what purpose should odours be prepared, if the sense of smelling had been denied? Or why the distinctions of bitter and sweet, of savoury and unsavoury, unless a palate had been likewise given, conveniently placed, to arbitrate between them, and declare the difference? Is not that Providence, Aristodemus, in a most eminent manner conspicuous, which, because the eye of man is so delicate in its contexture, hath therefore prepared eyelids like doors, whereby to secure it—which extend of themselves whenever it is needful, and again close when sleep approaches? Are not these eyelids provided as it were with a fence on the edge of them, to keep off the wind and guard the eye? Even the eyebrow itself is not without its office; but as a pent-house is prepared to turn off the sweat, which, falling from the forehead, might enter and annoy that no less tender than astonishing part of us! Is it not to be admired that the ears should take in sounds of every sort, and yet are not too much filled by them? That the fore-teeth of the animal should be formed in such a manner as is evidently best suited for the cutting of its food, as those on the side for grinding it in pieces? That the mouth through which this food is conveyed should be placed so near the nose and the eyes as to prevent the passing *unnoticed* whatever is unfit for nourishment; while nature, on the contrary, hath set at a distance, and concealed from the senses, all that might disgust or any way offend them? And canst thou still doubt, Aristodemus! whether a

disposition of parts like *this* should be the work of chance, or of wisdom and contrivance ?'

"'I have no longer any doubt,' replied Aristodemus; 'and indeed the more I consider it, the more evident it appears to me, that man must be the *masterpiece* of some great artificer, carrying along with it infinite marks of the love and favour of Him who hath thus formed it.'

"'And what thinkest thou, Aristodemus, of that *desire* in the individual which leads to the continuance of the species? Of that tenderness and affection in the female towards her young, so necessary for its preservation? Of that unremitted love of life, and dread of dissolution, which take such strong possession of us from the moment we begin to be?'

"'I think of them,' answered Aristodemus, 'as so many regular operations of the same great and wise artist, deliberately determined to preserve what he hath once made.'

"'But farther,—unless thou desirest to ask me questions;—seeing, Aristodemus, thou thyself art conscious of reason and intelligence, supposest thou there is no intelligence elsewhere? Thou knowest thy body to be a small part of that wide extended earth which thou everywhere beholdest;—the moisture contained in it thou also knowest to be a small portion of that mighty mass of waters whereof seas themselves are but a part; while the rest of the elements contribute out of their abundance to thy formation. It is the soul then alone,—that intellectual part of us! which is come to *thee* by some lucky chance; from, I know not where; if so be, there is indeed no intelligence elsewhere. And we must be forced to confess that this stupendous universe, with all the various bodies contained therein, equally amazing, whether we consider their magnitude or number, whatever their use, whatever their order,—*all* have been produced, not by *intelligence* but *chance!*'

"'It is with difficulty that I can suppose otherwise,' returned Aristodemus, 'for I behold none of those gods whom you speak of as making and governing all things; whereas I see the artists, when at their work, here among us.'

"'Neither yet seest thou thy soul, Aristodemus, which, how-

ever, most assuredly governs thy body; although it may well seem, by thy manner of talking, that it is *chance*, and not *reason* which governs thee.'

"'I do not despise the gods,' said Aristodemus; 'on the contrary, I conceive so highly of their excellence, as to suppose they stand in no need either of me or of my services.'

"'Thou mistakest the matter, Aristodemus; the greater magnificence they have shown in their care of *thee*, so much the more honour and service thou owest them.'

"'Be assured,' said Aristodemus, 'if I once could be persuaded the gods took care of man, I should want no monitor to remind me of my duty.'

"'And canst thou doubt, Aristodemus, if the gods take care of man! Hath not the glorious privilege of walking upright been *alone* bestowed on him, whereby he may, with the better advantage, survey what is around him; contemplate with more ease those splendid objects which are above; and avoid the numerous ills and inconveniences which would otherwise befall him? Other animals, indeed, they have provided with feet, by which they may remove from one place to another; but to *man* they have also given *hands*, with which he can form many things for his use, and make himself happier than creatures of any other kind. A tongue hath been bestowed on every other animal; but what animal, except man, hath the power of forming words with it, whereby to explain his thoughts, and make them intelligible to others? and to show that the gods have had regard to his very pleasures, they have not limited them, like those of other animals, to times and seasons, but man is left to indulge in them whenever not hurtful to him.'

"'But it is not with respect to the body alone that the gods have shown themselves thus bountiful to man! their most excellent gift is that *soul* they have infused into him, which so far surpasses what is elsewhere to be found. For by what animal, except man, is even the existence of those gods discovered, who have produced, and still uphold, in such regular order, this beautiful and stupendous frame of the universe? What other species of creatures are to be found that can serve

—that can adore them? What other animal is able, like man, to provide against the assaults of heat and cold, of thirst and hunger? that can lay up remedies for the time of sickness, and improve the strength nature hath given by a well-proportioned exercise? that can receive like him, information and instruction; or so happily keep in memory what he hath seen, and heard, and learnt? These things being so, who seeth not that man is, as it were, *a God* in the midst of this visible creation; so far doth he surpass, whether in the endowments of soul or body, all animals whatsoever that have been produced therein! For if the body of the ox had been joined to the mind of man, the acuteness of the latter would have stood him in small stead, while unable to execute the well-designed plan; nor would the human form have been of more use to the brute, so long as it remained destitute of understanding. But in thee! Aristodemus, hath been joined to a wonderful soul a body no less wonderful; and sayest thou after this, "the gods take no thought for me!" What wouldst thou, then, more to convince thee of their care?'

"'I would they should send and inform me,' said Aristodemus, 'what things I *ought*, or *ought not* to do; in like manner as thou sayest they frequently do to thee.'

"'And what then, Aristodemus! supposest thou, that when the gods give out some oracle to *all* the Athenians, they mean it not for *thee?*—If, by their prodigies, they declare aloud to all Greece,—to *all* mankind,—the things which shall befall them,—are they dumb to *thee* alone?—And art *thou* the only person whom they have placed beyond their care? Believest thou they would have wrought into the mind of man a persuasion of their being *able* to make him happy or miserable, if so be they had no such *power?*—Or would not even man himself, long ere this, have seen through the gross delusion?—How is it, Aristodemus, thou rememberest, or remarkest not, that the kingdoms and commonwealths, most renowned as well for their wisdom as antiquity, are those whose piety and devotion hath been the most observable? and that even man himself is never so well disposed to serve the Deity as in that part of life when

reason bears the greatest sway, and his judgment supposed in its full strength and maturity. Consider, my Aristodemus, that the soul which resides in thy body can govern it at pleasure. Why then may not the soul of the universe, which pervades and animates every part of it, govern it in like manner ?—If thine eye hath the power to take in many objects, and these placed at no small distance from it, marvel not if the eye of the Deity can, at one glance, comprehend the whole ? And as thou perceivest it not beyond thy ability to extend thy care, at the same time, to the concerns of Athens, Egypt, Sicily, why thinkest thou, my Aristodemus, that the Providence of God may not easily extend itself throughout the whole universe ? As, therefore, among men we make best trial of the affection and gratitude of our neighbour by showing him kindness, and discover his wisdom by consulting him in our distress, do thou, in like manner, behave towards the gods. And if thou wouldst experience what their wisdom, and what their love, render thyself deserving the communication of some of those divine secrets which may not be penetrated by man, and are imparted to those alone who consult, who adore, who obey the Deity. Then shalt thou, my Aristodemus, understand there is a Being whose eye pierceth throughout all nature, and whose ear is open to every sound; extended to all place; extending through all time; and whose bounty and care can know no other bounds than those fixed by his own creation !'

" By this discourse, and others of the like nature, Socrates taught his friends that they were not only to forbear whatever was impious, unjust, or unbecoming before men; but even when alone they ought to have a regard to all their actions, since the gods have their eyes continually upon us, and none of our designs can be concealed from them."[1]

The evidence which the foregoing considerations afford for the existence of God constitutes what is commonly called the argument from *Final Causes*, and as the expression has the sanction of use in its favour, we shall continue to employ it,

[1] Xenophon's *Memorabilia of Socrates*. Translated by Sarah Fielding. [The reference to the original is Book I. chap. iv. sect. 2, *seq.*]

notwithstanding its impropriety. It was first introduced by Aristotle, who distinguished Causes into four kinds, the Efficient, the Material, the Formal, and the Final:—A distinction which, as Dr. Reid justly observes, "like many other of Aristotle's, is only a distinction of the various meanings of an ambiguous word; for the Efficient, the Matter, the Form, and the End, have *nothing common* in their nature by which they may be accounted species of the same *genus*.* But the Greek word which we translate *cause* had these four different meanings in Aristotle's days, and we have added *other* meanings. We do not indeed call the Matter or Form of a thing its cause; but we have Final causes, Second causes, Instrumental causes, Immediate causes, Predisponent causes, and I know not how many others."[1]

* [On this in Reid's *Collected Works* there is the following note:—"They have all *this* '*in common*'—that each is *an antecedent*, which *not being*, the consequent, called the effect, *would not be*."—The passage is from *The Active Powers*, Essay I. chap. vi.—*Works*, p. 526.—*Ed.*]

[1] This distinction of Aristotle's is illustrated by Seneca in his 65th Epistle —"Causam Aristoteles putat tribus modis dici. Prima, inquit, causa est ipsa Materia, sine qua nihil potest effici. Secunda, Opifex. Tertia, Forma quæ unicuique operi imponitur, tanquam statuæ; nam hanc Aristoteles Idos (Εἶδος) vocat. Quarta quoque, inquit, his accedit, Propositum totius operis.

"Quid sit hoc, aperiam. Æs, prima statuæ causa est: nunquam enim facta esset, nisi fuisset id, [Materies,] ex quo ea funderetur, ducereturve. Secunda causa, Artifex est: non potuisset enim æs illud in habitum statuæ figurari, nisi accessissent peritæ manus. Tertia causa est Forma: neque enim statua ista Doryphoros aut Diadumenos vocaretur, nisi hæc illi esset impressa facies. Quarta causa est, faciendi Propositum: nam nisi hoc fuisset, facta non esset. Quid est propositum? Quod invitavit artificem, quod ille secutus fecit. Vel pecunia est hoc, si venditurus fabricavit; vel gloria, si laboravit in nomen; vel religio, si donum templo paravit. Ergo et hæc causa est, propter quam fit. An non putas inter causas facti operis numerandum, *quo remoto factum non esset?*"

Aristotle's own words on the subject (*Natur. Auscult.* [L. II. c. iii.]) are thus translated by Mr. Harris.

"In one manner that may be called a Cause, *out of which, existing as a part of it, anything is made or compounded.* Thus is brass the cause of a statue, silver of a cup, and so also the higher genera in which these are included;" (as metal the genus of brass and silver, body the genus including metal, &c.)—"In another way, the *Form* and *Exemplar* of anything is its Cause; that is to say, in other words, the definition or rationale of its essence;" (that which, characterizing it to be such a particular thing, distinguishes it from all things else;) "and of this rationale the several higher genera. Thus the cause of the diapason or octave is the proportion of two to one; and more generally than

Dr. Reid has observed that the argument from Final Causes, when reduced to a syllogism, contains two propositions. First, that design may be traced from its effects: This is the major proposition. The minor is, that there are appearances of design in the universe.* The ancient sceptics, he says, granted the first, but denied the second. The moderns (in consequence of the discoveries in natural philosophy) have been obliged to abandon the ground which their predecessors maintained, and have disputed the major proposition.

Among those who have denied the possibility of tracing design from its effects, Mr. Hume is the most eminent; and he seems to have considered his reasonings on this subject as forming one of the most splendid parts of his philosophy; according to him all such inferences are inconclusive, being neither demonstrable by reasoning, nor deducible from experience.

In examining Mr. Hume's argument on this subject, Dr. Reid† admits, that the inferences we make of design from its effects, are not the result of reasoning or experience; but still he contends such inferences may be made with a degree of cer-

that, is number; and is moreover the several parts out of which this definition is formed.—Add to this Cause, that other, *from whence the original principle of change, or of ceasing to change;* as for instance, the person who deliberates is the cause of that which results from such deliberation; the father is the cause of the son; and, in general, the *Efficient* of the thing effected, the power *changing* of the thing changed.—Besides these Causes there is that also which is considered as the *End*, that is to say, the Cause *for the sake of which* the thing is done. Thus the cause of exercising is health; for if it be asked why does he use exercise? we say to preserve his health; and having said thus much, we think we have given the proper cause."— *Works* of James Harris, Esq., Vol. I. pp. 156, 157. [Quarto edition.—Note xvii. on the First of *The Three Treatises.*]

These quotations (in which I think there is a great deal of what Dr. Priestley somewhere calls *solemn trifling,*) appear to me to justify fully the criticism I borrowed from Dr. Reid, that they amount only to an exposition of the different meanings of an ambiguous word. I believe it would be for the advantage of moral science if the phrase *final cause* were as completely banished from our language as the phrases *material* and *formal* causes; but when modes of expression are sanctioned by universal use, I do not consider myself as entitled to lead the way in innovations. It is sufficient for me to caution my readers against the improprieties of common language, and to guard as far as I can against the errors in reasoning to which they lead.

* [*On the Intellectual Powers*, Essay VI. chap. vi.— *Works*, pp. 460, 461.]

† [Ibid.]

tainty equal to what the human mind is able to attain in any instance whatever. The opinions we form of the talents of other men, nay, our belief that other men are intelligent beings, are founded on this very inference of design from its effects. Intelligence and design are not objects of our senses; and yet we judge of them every moment from external conduct and behaviour, with as little hesitation as we pronounce on the existence of what we immediately perceive.

While Dr. Reid contends in this manner for the authority of this important principle of our constitution, he bestows due praise on Mr. Hume for the acuteness with which he has exposed the inconclusiveness of the common *demonstrations* of the existence of a designing cause, to be found among the writers on natural religion; and he acknowledges the service that, without intending it, he has thereby rendered to the cause of truth; inasmuch as, by the alarming consequences he deduces from his doctrine, he has invited philosophers to an accurate examination of a subject which had formerly been considered in a very superficial manner, and has pointed out to them indirectly the true foundation on which this important article of our belief ought to be placed. With the same view it may be of some use, before we proceed farther, to confirm such of Mr. Hume's principles as appear to be just, by some additional remarks and illustrations.

First, then, it may be observed, (as a strong presumption that our belief of the existence of a designing cause is not the result of reasoning,) that it has prevailed in all nations and ages, among the unlearned, as well as among the learned. Indeed, without a capacity of inferring design from its effects, it would be impossible for us to conduct ourselves in the common affairs of life; a consideration which of itself renders it probable to those who are acquainted with the general analogy of our constitution, that it is not entrusted to the slow and uncertain exercise of our reasoning powers, but that it arises from some intuitive perception of the mind.

In order to feel the full force of these observations, it is necessary to consider, that without a capacity of inferring de-

sign from its effects, it would be impossible for us to form any judgment of the intellectual powers, or of the characters of other men, or even to know that they are intelligent beings. The qualities in their minds are not objects of our senses, we only perceive their effects; but these effects indicate to us certain designs and purposes from which they proceed, as certainly as an impression made on an organ of sense indicates the existence of the object. The inferences we make of intelligence and design, as displayed in the universe, are perfectly analogous to this; and whatever sceptical doubts affect our conclusions in the one case, are equally well founded in the other.

As a farther proof that this principle is not demonstrable, we may remark, that those authors who have been most successful in exposing the doubts of sceptics on the subject, have had recourse not to argument, but to ridicule, and have rested their cause chiefly on a view of the absurdities and inconsistencies into which similar doubts would lead us, if they were extended to the common concerns of life:—In a word, the only proof they give of the principle, is by showing that no man can call it in question, without justly exposing himself to the charge of insanity.

"Hic ego non mirer esse quemquam, qui sibi persuadeat, corpora quædam solida atque individua vi et gravitate ferri, mundumque effici ornatissimum et pulcherrimum ex eorum corporum concursione fortuita? Hoc qui existimat fieri potuisse, non intelligo, cur non idem putet, si innumerabiles unius et viginti formæ literarum vel aureæ, vel quales libet,[1] aliquo conjiciantur, posse ex his in terram excussis annales Ennii, ut deinceps legi possint, effici; quod nescio an ne in uno quidem versu possit tantum valere fortuna. Isti autem quemadmodum asseverant, ex corpusculis non colore, non qualitate aliqua, quam ποιότητα Græci vocant, non sensu præditis, sed concurrentibus temerè atque casu, mundum esse perfectum? Vel innumerabiles potius in omni puncto temporis alios nasci, alios interire? Quòd si mundum efficere potest concursus atomo-

[1] It has been thought by some that this passage of Cicero may have perhaps suggested the first idea of the art of Printing by means of moveable types.

rum, cur porticum, cur templum, cur domum, cur urbem non potest, quæ sunt minus operosa et multo quidem faciliora? Certe ita temerè de mundo effutiunt, ut mihi quidem nunquam hunc admirabilem cœli ornatum, qui locus est proximus, suspexisse videantur."[1]

So far, therefore, we agree with Mr. Hume, in admitting that our inferences of design from its effects, are not the result of reasoning. Still farther, we agree with him in admitting, that these inferences are not the result of experience.

In proof of this it is sufficient to observe, that experience can only inform us of what *is*, and not of what *must be*; or, as Dr. Reid expresses it, experience *can only discover to us what is* CONTINGENTLY *true*; it cannot in any instance lead us to the knowledge of *necessary* truth.* Now, our belief that a combination of means conspiring to a particular end implies intelligence, involves a perception of necessary truth. It is not that such a combination has been always or generally found to proceed from an intelligent cause, but that an intelligent cause was necessary to its production, and that the contrary supposition is absurd.

But farther, experience can only inform us of a connexion between a sign and the thing signified, in those cases in which both of these have been separate and distinct objects of our perceptions; but in the instance before us the thing signified is not an immediate object of sense, nor indeed of consciousness; for even in my own case I perceive the existence of mind only from its operations and effects. In other words, my knowledge of the *thing signified* is not *direct:* it is only *relative to the signs* by which it is suggested to the understanding.

In what manner, then, it may be asked, shall we explain the origin of our conviction that the universe is the work of a designing cause, if it be granted that this conviction is neither founded on reasoning nor on experience? According to Mr.

[1] *De Nat. Deor.* II. xxxvii.

* [Reid frequently, if not always consistently, enounces this truth. Thus, *Intellectual Powers*, Essay II. chap. xix. — *Works*, p. 323; Essay VI. chap. vi. — *Works*, pp. 455, 460; *Active Powers*, Essay I. chaps. iv., v.— *Works*, pp. 521, 524.]

Hume, nothing more is necessary than these concessions to show that it is an illusion of the imagination, or a prejudice of the nursery.

But surely the inference is too hasty; for are there not many truths, the contrary of which we feel to be impossible, which are neither demonstrable by reasoning, nor confirmed by experience? Such are all those truths which are perceived by an intuitive judgment of the mind. The authority of these truths is at least on a footing with those truths which rest on demonstration, inasmuch as all demonstration is ultimately founded on them; and it is incomparably superior to that of truths learned from experience, inasmuch as the contrary of *these* is always conceivable, and never implies any absurdity or contradiction.

From the observations already made in the prosecution of this argument, I flatter myself it sufficiently appears, that if there be such a thing as an intuitive perception or judgment of the mind, the inferences we make of design from its effects are entitled to the appellation. A capacity of forming such inferences is plainly an essential part of our constitution; and to dispute their certainty in the common conduct of life, by urging sceptical subtilties in opposition to them, would expose a man to the charge of insanity, as infallibly as if he were to dispute the certainty of a mathematical axiom.[1]

[1] The foregoing observations have been all touched upon by former writers. What follows has not hitherto (so far as I know) been urged in opposition to Mr. Hume, and to my mind is more satisfactory than any view of the subject that has yet been taken by his opponents. It is, however, after all, little more than a comment on some *concessions* made in the course of the argument by the sceptical Philo; of which concessions I think his opponent, Cleanthes, might have availed himself more triumphantly than he has done.—(See Mr. Hume's posthumous *Dialogues on Natural Religion.*) It must always be remembered that the latter is the hero of the dialogue, and is to be understood as speaking Mr. Hume's own opinions.—(See a Confidential Letter of his to his friend Sir Gilbert Elliot, which I have published in the second volume of the *Philosophy of the Human Mind,* [Note C.—*Works,* Vol. III. p. 372, *seq.* Likewise *Works,* Vol. I. pp. 603-607.] —See also the concluding paragraph of the Dialogue.) I think it fair to recall this to the reader's memory, as the reasonings of Philo have been repeatedly quoted as parts of Hume's Philosophical System, although the words of Shylock and Caliban might with equal justice be quoted as speaking the real sentiments of Shakespeare.

But leaving these abstract topics, let us for a moment attend to the scope of the sceptical argument as it bears on the evidences of Natural Religion. To those who examine it with attention it must appear obvious, that, if it proves anything, it leads to this general conclusion, that it would be perfectly impossible for the *Deity*, if he *did* exist, to exhibit to man any satisfactory evidence of design by the order and perfection of his works. That every thing we see *is consistent* with the supposition of its being the work of an intelligent author, Philo would (I presume) have granted; and at any rate, supposing the order of the universe to have been as complete as imagination can conceive, it would not obviate in the least the objection stated in the dialogue, inasmuch as this objection is founded not on any appearances of disorder or imperfection, but on the impossibility of rendering intelligence and design manifest to our faculties by the effects they produce. Whether this logical proposition is or is not true, can be decided only by an appeal to the judgment of the human understanding in analogous circumstances. If I were thrown ashore on a desert island, and were anxious to leave behind me some memorial which might inform those who should afterwards visit the same spot, that it had once been inhabited by a human being, what expedient could I employ but to execute some work of art;—to rear a dwelling, to enclose a piece of ground, or to arrange a number of stones in such a symmetrical order that their position could not be ascribed to chance? This would surely be a language intelligible to all nations, whether civilized or savage; and which, without the help of reasoning, would convey its meaning with the force of a perception. It was thus that *Aristippus* the *Cyrenaic* felt (according to the story told by *Vitruvius*) when, being shipwrecked on an unknown coast, and seeing some geometrical diagrams traced on the sand, he called aloud to his companions,—*Bene speremus, comites,* HOMINUM *enim vestigia video.*

Now all this seems wonderfully applicable to the subject before us. If the universe had really been created by a powerful and intelligent being, whose pleasure it was to proclaim

to human reason his existence and attributes, what means could have been devised more effectual for this purpose than those actually employed! A display of order, of beauty, of contrivance, obvious to the apprehensions of the most unlearned, and commanding more and more our admiration and our wonder as our faculties improve, and as our knowledge extends. These evidences of power, of wisdom, and of goodness may be regarded as *natural and universal signs* by which the Creator reveals himself to his creatures. There is accordingly,—"No speech where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world."*

That in these remarks I have done no injustice to Philo's reasoning, appears from a remarkable passage which occurs in a subsequent part of the dialogue, where, in my opinion, he yields without reserve the only point for which it was of much importance for a sceptic to contend. The logical subtleties formerly quoted about *experience* and *belief*, (even supposing them to remain unanswered,) are but little calculated to shake the authority of principles on which we are every moment called on to act in the business of life. I shall transcribe in Philo's words the passage I allude to, premising only, that, for this memorable concession, (so contrary in its spirit to the sceptical cavils of the ancient Epicureans,) we are chiefly indebted to the lustre thrown on the order of nature by the physical researches of the two last centuries.

"Supposing there were a God who did not discover himself immediately to our senses, were it possible for him to give stronger proofs of his existence than what appear on the whole face of nature? What indeed could such a divine being do but copy the present economy of things; render many of his artifices so plain that no stupidity could mistake them; afford glimpses of still greater artifices which demonstrate his prodigious superiority over our narrow apprehensions, and conceal altogether a great many from such imperfect creatures?"[1]

Another concession extorted from Philo by the discoveries of modern science is still more important. I need not point out

* [*Psalm*, xix. 3, 4.]

[1] *Dialogues on Natural Religion*, p. 232, [Part xii.]

its coincidence with some remarks already made: "A purpose, an intention, a design, strikes everywhere the most careless, the most stupid thinker, and no man can be so hardened in absurd systems as at all times to reject it. *That nature does nothing in vain*, is a maxim established in all the schools, merely from the contemplation of the works of nature, without any religious purpose; and from a firm conviction of its truth, an anatomist who had observed a new organ or canal would never be satisfied till he had also discovered its use and intention. One great foundation of the Copernican system is the [Aristotelic] maxim, *That nature acts by the simplest methods, and chooses the most proper means to any end;* and astronomers often, without thinking of it, lay this strong foundation of piety and religion. The same thing is observable in other parts of philosophy; and thus all the sciences almost lead us insensibly to acknowledge a first intelligent author; and their authority is often so much the greater, as they do not directly profess that intention."[1]

"But," (says Mr. Hume in one of his *Philosophical Essays*,) "it is only when two *species* of objects are found to be constantly conjoined that we can infer the one from the other; and were an effect presented which was entirely singular, and could not be comprehended under any known *species*, I do not see that we could form any conjecture or inference at all concerning its cause. If experience and observation and analogy be indeed the only guides which we can reasonably follow in inferences of this nature, both the effect and cause must bear a similarity and resemblance to other effects and causes which we know, and which we have found in many instances to be conjoined with each other."[2] If I understand the scope and

[1] *Dialogues on Natural Religion*, p. 228, [Part xii.]

[2] Hume's *Essays*, Vol. II. p. 157.—[*Inquiry concerning Human Understanding*, Sect. xi. at end.]

As the discourse from which this passage is taken is composed in the form of a dialogue, I do not feel myself entitled to suppose that it expresses Mr. Hume's own opinion, more particularly as he has introduced the section with the following paragraph:—"I was lately engaged in conversation with a friend who loves sceptical paradoxes; where, though he advanced many principles of which I can by no means approve, yet as they seem to be curious, and to bear some relation to the chain of

import of this reasoning, nothing more is necessary for its refutation but to explain its meaning. To what, then, does it amount? Merely to this! "That if we had been accustomed to see worlds produced, some by design, and others without it, and had observed that such a world as this which we inhabit was always the effect of design, we might then, from past experience, conclude that it was in this way our world was produced; but having no such experience we have no means of forming any conclusion about it."[1]

The argument, it is manifest, proceeds entirely on the supposition, that our inferences of design are in every case the result of experience, the contrary of which has been already sufficiently shown; and which indeed, (as Dr. Reid has remarked,*) "if it be admitted as a general truth, leads to this conclusion, that no man can have any evidence of the existence of any intelligent being but himself."[2]

Having said so much with respect to the sceptical objections suggested in Mr. Hume's philosophy against the argument from Final Causes, I proceed to consider another objection which some other philosophers have urged with similar views. In order to judge of the wisdom of any design it is necessary (they observe) to know, first, what end the artist proposes to himself, and then to examine the means which he has employed to accomplish it. But in the universe all we see is, that certain things *are* accomplished, without having an opportunity of comparing them with a plan previously proposed. A stone

reasoning carried on throughout this inquiry, I shall here copy them from my memory as accurately as I can, in order to submit them to the judgment of the reader." From these words it may at least be inferred that Mr. Hume thought the paradox worthy of consideration, and therefore it would be improper to pass it over here entirely in silence.

[1] Reid, [*Intellectual Powers*, Essay VI. chap. vi.—*Works*, p. 461.]

* [See *Intellectual Powers*, Essay VI. chap. v.—*Works*, p. 449.]

[2] See some remarks on this subject by Dr. Beattie.—*Essay on Truth*, Part I. chap. ii. § 2. Some of them indeed refer rather to our inferences of causation and power, than of intelligence and design; but the objection in question applies equally to our inferences in both cases, and Dr. Beattie's answer is no less satisfactory in the one than in the other.

"It is true the universe is, as one may say, a work *sui generis*," &c.—P. 117, 2d edit.—[Ibid. § 5.]

thrown at random must necessarily hit one object or another. When we see, therefore, such an effect produced we are not entitled, independently of other information, to praise the dexterity of the marksman. It is *possible* indeed that this was the object he was aiming at, but as any other supposition is equally possible, it is evident that before we can judge of his skill we must be assured that this really was the case from his own authority.

To this objection it might perhaps be a sufficient answer to observe, that although from a single effect we may not be entitled to infer intelligence in the cause, yet when we see a *number* of causes conspiring to *one* end the case is different. We here see not only that an effect takes place, but have an intuitive conviction that this was the very effect intended. From seeing a single stone strike an object, we may not be entitled to conclude that this was the object aimed at. But what conclusion would we draw if we saw the same object invariably hit by a number of stones thrown in succession? Surely we should conclude that this was not merely the work of chance.

But this is not all. A variety of cases might be mentioned, in which we have really an opportunity of comparing the wisdom of nature with the ends to which it is directed. Of this many remarkable instances occur in the economy of the human body.

When any accident or disease injures the human frame, it is well known that the body possesses within itself a power of alleviating or remedying the evil. In consequence of this power, (which has been called the *Vis Medicatrix naturæ,*) it happens that whenever the structure or functions of any part of the body are disturbed, such operations are immediately excited as have a tendency to restore the machine to its former state. If any of the solid parts of the body are divided in consequence of suppuration, wounds, or otherwise, the cavity is in time filled up and obliterated by the operation of natural causes. The breach in the internal parts is remedied, and the wound is gradually covered with a new skin. In many cases, too, in which parts are destroyed, efforts are made by nature to repair the injury. In this manner the skin, tendons, ligaments, and

various other parts of the body, are restored after having been destroyed. Even bones are restored; not only in cases of fracture, but sometimes a new bone has been formed even when the old one was entirely taken away. In all these instances we not only see an effect produced, but we see the efforts of nature directed to a particular end; inasmuch as, after being turned out of her ordinary course, she comes back to it again without any assistance from art.

There are, too, a great variety of cases, particularly in the animal economy, in which we see the same effect produced in different instances by very different means; and in which, of consequence, we have an opportunity of comparing the wisdom of nature with the ends she has in view. "Art and means,' says Baxter, "are designedly multiplied, that we might not take it for the effects of chance: And in some cases the method itself is different, that we might see it is not the effect of surd necessity."[1]—"I shall stop," says Derham, "at one prodigious work of nature and manifest contrivance of the Creator, and that is the circulation of the blood in the fœtus in the womb, so different from the method thereof after it is born."*

The following ingenious remarks of Mr. Ray may be of use for the more complete illustration of the same argument. "Man is always mending and altering his works; but nature observes the same tenor, because her works are so perfect that there is no place for amendments, nothing that can be reprehended. The most sagacious men in so many ages have not been able to find any flaw in these divinely contrived and formed machines; no blot or error in this great volume of the world, as if anything had been an imperfect essay at the first; nothing that can be altered for the better; nothing but if it were altered would be marred. This could not have been had man's body been the work of chance, and not counsel and providence. Why should there be constantly the same parts? Why should they retain constantly the same places? Why should they be endued with the same shape and

[1] *Inquiry into the Nature of the Human Soul*, Vol. I. p. 136. Third edition [and Second, Note. Sect. II. § xvi.] * [*Physico-Theology*, Book IV. chap. iv.]

figure? Nothing so contrary as constancy and chance. Should I see a man throw the same number a thousand times together upon but three dice, could you persuade me that this were accidental, and that there was no necessary cause of it? How much more incredible, then, is it that constancy in such a variety, such a multiplicity of parts, should be the result of chance? Neither yet can these works be the effects of necessity or fate, for then there would be the same constancy observed in the smaller as well as in the larger parts of vessels; whereas *there* we see nature doth as it were sport itself, the minute ramifications of all the vessels, veins, arteries, and nerves, infinitely varying in individuals of the same species, so that they are not in any two alike."[1]

The foregoing passage I quote with the greater confidence, as I find that the most eminent and original physiologist of the present age has been led, by his enlightened researches concerning the laws of the animal economy, into a train of thinking strikingly similar.

"Nature," says Baron Cuvier, "while comprising herself strictly within those limits which the conditions necessary for existence prescribe to her, has yielded to her spontaneous fecundity wherever these conditions did not limit her operations; and without ever passing beyond the small number of combinations that can be realized in the essential modifications of the important organs, she seems to have given full scope to her fancy in filling up the subordinate parts. With respect to these, it is not inquired whether an individual form, whether a particular arrangement, be necessary. It seems often not to have been asked, whether it be even useful in order to reduce it to practice. It is sufficient that it be possible, that it destroy not the harmony of the whole. Accordingly, as we recede from the principal organs, and approach to those of less importance, the varieties in structure and appearance become more numerous; and when we arrive at the surface of the body, where the parts the least essential, and whose injuries are the least momentous, are placed, the number of varieties is so great, that the con-

[1] Ray's *Wisdom of God in the Creation*, [Part ii.]

joined labours of naturalists have not yet been able to give us an adequate idea of them."[1]

The science of comparative anatomy, too, furnishes very striking confirmations of the foregoing doctrine. From seeing the effect produced in *any one* animal, we might not perhaps be entitled to conclude that it was in order to produce this effect that the organ was contrived. But when, in the case of *different species* of animals, we see the same effect brought about by means extremely different, it is impossible for us to doubt that it was this common end which, in all these instances, nature had in view. And, by the way, it is such comparative views of the structure of different tribes, that afford the best lights for guiding our researches concerning the functions of the different organs in the animal economy. "Incidenda autem animalia," (says Albinus, in his preface to Harvey's *Exercitatio de Motu Cordis*,) "quibus partes illæ quarum actiones quærimus eædem atque homini sunt, aut certe similes iis; ex quibus sine metu erroris judicare de illis hominis liceat. Quin et reliqua, si modo aliquam habeant ad hominem similitudinem, idonea sunt ad aliquod suppeditandum."

The coincidence between these last observations and the following passage from an anonymous writer, who seems to have made *comparative anatomy* his particular study, gives me much additional faith in their justness. "The *intention* of nature," he observes, "can nowhere be so well learned as from comparative anatomy; that is, if we would understand physiology, and reason on the functions in the animal economy, we must see how the same end is brought about in other species. We must contemplate the part or organ in different animals, its shape, position, connexion with the other parts, &c., and observe what thence arises. If we find ONE COMMON EFFECT constantly produced (though) in a very different way, then we may safely conclude that this is the USE or FUNCTION of the part. This reasoning can never betray us, if we are but sure of the facts."[2]

[1] *Leçons d'Anatomie Comparée.* (The sequel of the above passage deserves also to be consulted.)

[2] Letter prefixed to Monro's *Comparative Anatomy.* London, 1744.

In comparing the anatomy of different tribes of animals, we find that the differences we observe in their structure have a reference to their way of life, and the habits for which they are destined; so that from knowing the latter we might be able, in particular cases, to frame conjectures *a priori* concerning the former. Thus all animals that live on vegetable food have their small guts considerably larger, and their great guts more capacious, than such as feed on other animals. The latter, again, have their bladder more strong and muscular, and less capacious, than those that live on vegetable food, such as horses, cows, swine, &c., whose bladder of urine is perfectly membranous, and very large. In both of these cases, the differences have a manifest reference to the kinds of food on which the animal is to subsist.

"In all animals,"—says Cuvier, of whose high authority on physiological subjects I am always glad to avail myself, and whose indefatigable researches in comparative anatomy have shed a new blaze of light on the marks of systematical design in the animal kingdom,—"in all animals the system of digestive organs has direct relations to the organs of motion and of sensation; for the structure and disposition of the digestive organs necessarily determines the kind of aliment proper for every species of animals; and it is obvious, that, if the senses and organs of motion in any species of animals be insufficient to distinguish and procure for them their proper aliment, that species of animals cannot subsist.

"Thus, animals who can digest nothing but flesh must, under the penalty of inevitable destruction, be able to discern their prey at a distance, to pursue it, to catch it, to get the better of it, to tear it to pieces. They must, therefore, possess a piercing eye, an acute sense of smell, swiftness in pursuit, address and force in the organs for catching their prey. Accordingly, canine teeth, adapted to tear flesh, were never found in the same animal along with a hoof fit for supporting the weight of the body, but totally unqualified for laying hold of prey. Hence the rule that every hoofed animal is herbivorous; and as corollaries from this general principle, the maxims that

a hoofed foot indicates grinding teeth with flat surfaces, a long alimentary canal, a large stomach, and often more stomachs than one, with many other similar consequences.

"The same harmony subsists among the different parts of the system of organs of motion. As all the parts of this system act mutually, and are acted upon, especially when the whole body of the animal is in motion, the forms of all the different parts are strictly related. There is hardly a bone that can vary in its surfaces, in its curvatures, in its protuberances, without corresponding variations in other bones; and in this way a skilful naturalist, from the appearance of a single bone, will be often able to conclude, to a certain extent, with respect to the form of the whole skeleton to which it belonged."[1]

From the foregoing observations I hope it sufficiently appears that *design* may be inferred from its effects, and in particular, that design may be traced in various parts of the universe from an actual examination of the means which nature employs when she is evidently aiming at a certain end. I now proceed to consider more particularly the characters of this design as it is displayed in the universe; or, in other words, to consider how far the design seems to indicate wisdom, and whether it seems to operate in conformity to *one* uniform plan. The *first* inquiry is useful by its tendency to elevate our conceptions of the Supreme Being, and the *second* is necessary for the demonstration of his unity. The first inquiry may perhaps seem to some to be involved in the preceding reasonings, but the case is otherwise; for the words design and wisdom are by no means synonymous; and it is possible that a philosopher may grant that there are marks of *design* in the universe, who thinks but meanly of the *wisdom* displayed in its formation. This was the case with King Alphonso, [of Castile,] when he ventured to censure the planetary system, (according to the

[1] *Leçons d'Anatomie Comparée.*

On these and various other instances of wise contrivance in the system of nature, more particularly in the frame of animated beings, much valuable instruction may be derived from an *Essay on Final Causes* by the Honourable Robert Boyle.

conceptions which astronomers then entertained of it,) as a contrivance which admitted of important improvements. Distinct, however, as these two inquiries are, they have often been confounded by sceptical writers, who imagined that every little criticism they were able to make on the course of events, either in the physical or moral world, furnished an argument in favour of atheism.

I cannot help remarking, on the other hand, that the same distinction between *design* and *wisdom* has been overlooked by many of the excellent writers who have employed their genius in defending and illustrating the truths of natural religion. Of those who have speculated on the subject of Final Causes, the greater number seem plainly to have considered every new conjecture they were able to form concerning the ends and uses of the different objects composing the universe, and of the general laws by which its phenomena are regulated, as an additional proof that it is not the work of chance or necessity; and to have imagined that the greater the number of such *ends* and *uses* they were able to trace, the more irresistible they rendered the evidences of design and intelligence. But it appears to me that the evidences of *design* in the universe are alike obvious to the savage and to the philosopher; and that they are much more forcibly impressed on the minds of those whose understandings have been perverted by sceptical sophistry, by *general* views of nature, than by examining her works in detail. Or if any person should think otherwise, it must at least be granted that *any one* organized and animated body furnishes just as complete evidence of this truth as could be obtained from the most accurate examination of all the different subjects of natural history. The proper use of such speculations is not to refute the atheist, but to illustrate the wisdom and the unity of design displayed in the material and moral worlds; or rather to enlighten and exalt our own understandings, by tracing with humility and reverence the operations of a wisdom which is infinite and divine. If there be any principle whatever which a philosopher is entitled to take for granted, it is certainly this, that there are marks of design in the objects around us and in

our own frame; and to write large volumes in order to prove it is to offer an insult to human reason. In the observations, accordingly, which I have made on the subject, I have not thought it necessary for me to offer any positive evidences in support of this belief, but have only aimed at refuting the sceptical cavils by which some have attempted to weaken it. To those who had never read, or who were never likely to read, such metaphysical speculations as those of Mr. Hume, I should not have thought of addressing one metaphysical argument; satisfied as I am that disquisitions of this kind, however useful they may be in combating other disquisitions of a similar nature, can never add to the authority of the original laws of human belief. The science of abstruse learning I consider in the same light with an ingenious writer, who compares it to "Achilles's spear, that healed the wounds it had made before. It serves to repair the damage itself had occasioned, and this is perhaps all it is good for. It casts no additional light upon the paths of life, but disperses the clouds with which it had overspread them before. It advances not the traveller one step in his journey, but conducts him back again to the spot from whence he wandered."[1]

I would not be understood by these remarks to detract from the merit of the authors to whom they refer. I only complain of the *form* in which they have presented their observations to the world, as demonstrations that a designing cause, or designing causes exist, and not as an humble attempt to display to those who are already impressed with this conviction, a few of those manifold indications of beneficent wisdom which the Author of all Things has been pleased for our instruction to place within the reach of our researches. Many of the observations which they have collected in the course of their inquiries are of inestimable value, but they have been frequently applied to an improper purpose, and hence very serious inconveniences have arisen. Among these inconveniences there are two of such magnitude, that I think it of importance to state them explicitly.

[1] Mr. [Abraham] Tucker, author of *The Light of Nature Pursued.*

1*st*, The size and number of the publications in question, have led superficial thinkers to imagine that the existence of God was a truth which required a multiplicity of proofs; and in consequence of this apprehension they have found their faith in it rather weakened than confirmed. While, on the other hand, those who were already convinced of this truth have turned aside with disgust from the perusal of so tedious a demonstration, leading to so obvious a conclusion. No expedient more effectual could have been devised for destroying that interest which the mind spontaneously takes in the details of natural philosophy and natural history, than to state them merely as premises subservient to the proof of the most incontestable of all propositions. Whereas, if the existence of an Intelligent Cause be taken for granted, and if we study his works not as *proofs* of *design*, but as manifestations of his wisdom, and revelations of his will, these branches of knowledge open inexhaustible sources of instruction and of delight to the mind. In the works of God we study the operations of his wisdom and goodness, as we study in the conduct and discourse of our fellow-creatures the peculiarities of their genius and characters; and, in proportion as our knowledge extends, we find our acquaintance with the plans of his Providence become more intimate, and our conceptions of his nature more elevated and sublime.

2*d*, When we accumulate a number of particular observations as proofs of the existence of an Intelligent Cause, we rest this important principle on a ground extremely open to the cavils of sceptics. In most cases, when we speculate concerning Final Causes, we are unable to do more than to suppose and to conjecture, and we are extremely apt, by indulging imagination too far, to bring ridicule on the cause we mean to support. Sometimes too it has happened that conjectures, which at first appeared extremely plausible, have been afterwards discovered to proceed on a misapprehension of facts. Such accidents never fail to furnish matter of triumph to the sceptic, as if the mistakes to which our limited faculties are liable in studying the works of God afforded any just ground for ascribing them

to chance, or to an unintelligent necessity.[1] But if, on the other hand, we acquiesce in those evidences of design, which a *general* survey of nature affords to the most common observer, the mistakes we may commit in the subsequent examination of her works, will have no effect in suggesting doubts or scruples with respect to the truths of religion; but impressed with a firm conviction that nothing is made in vain, we will consider every difficulty we meet with as a new lesson of humility to ourselves, and a new illustration of the unsearchable wisdom displayed in the universe.

I thought it proper to premise these general reflections to the remarks I am now to make, in order to point out the particular purpose to which I mean to apply them,—not as proofs that there exist designing and intelligent causes in nature, but as illustrations of that unity of design which connects together things the most remote and apparently insulated as parts of one system, and of that infinite wisdom which contrived and which superintends the whole.

A farther purpose may perhaps be answered by some of these remarks, if I am only able to state them in such a manner as to rouse the attention to those wonders *around* us and *within* us, which are apt to lose their effect in consequence of long familiarity. "Assiduitate quotidiana," says Cicero, "et consuetudine oculorum, assuescunt animi: neque admirantur, neque requirunt rationes earum rerum, quas semper vident: proinde quasi novitas nos magis quam magnitudo rerum debeat ad exquirendas causas excitare."[2] And to the same purpose the poet:—

[1] Diderot seems to have thought, that *one* single defect in the universe in point of systematical order, would conclude more strongly against the existence of the Deity than all the relations yet observed among its different parts would prove in its favour. "La nature imite, en se jouant, dans cent occasions, les productions d'art; et l'on pourroit demander combien il faudroit remarquer de rapports dans un être, pour avoir un certitude complète qu'il est l'ouvrage d'un artiste. *En quelle occasion, un seul défaut de symmétrie prouveroit plus que toute somme donnée de rapports.*" —(See the article *Beau* in the *Encyclopédie.*) This paradox is too extravagant to admit of a serious answer.

[2] *De Nat. Deor.* II. xxxviii.

"Hunc solem et stellas et decedentia certis
Tempora momentis, sunt qui formidine nullâ
Imbuti spectent."*

In such cases it is not necessary to teach men to *reason*, but to teach them to *attend;* to induce them to reflect on the objects and events which are daily presented to their view, and to listen to the natural suggestions of their own understandings. The supposition which Cicero quotes from Aristotle in speaking on this very subject is finely imagined. "Præclare Aristoteles, si essent (inquit) 'qui sub terra semper habitavissent, bonis et illustribus domiciliis, quæ essent ornata signis atque picturis, instructaque rebus iis omnibus, quibus abundant ii, qui beati putantur, nec tamen exissent umquam supra terram: accepissent autem fama et auditione, esse quoddam numen et vim Deorum: deinde aliquo tempore, patefactis terræ faucibus, ex illis abditis sedibus evadere in hæc loca, quæ nos incolimus, atque exire potuissent: cùm repentè terram et maria cælumque vidissent; nubium magnitudinem, ventorumque vim cognovissent, adspexissentque solem, ejusque tum magnitudinem pulchritudinemque, tum etiam efficientiam cognovissent, quod is diem efficeret, toto cælo luce diffusa: cum autem terras nox opacasset, tum cælum totum cernerent astris distinctum et ornatum, lunæque luminum varietatem, tum crescentis, tum senescentis, eorumque omnium ortus et occasus, atque in omni æternitate ratos immutabilesque cursus:—hæc cum viderent, profectò et esse Deos, et hæc tanta opera Deorum esse arbitrarentur.'"[1]

The following considerations (the greater part of which I must content myself with barely mentioning) tend chiefly to illustrate the wisdom and unity of design manifested in the universe, from a view of the relations which different parts of nature bear to each other, and from the concurrence of things apparently unconnected and even remote, in promoting the same benevolent purposes.

* [Horace, *Epist.* Lib. I. Ep. vi. 3.]

[1] *De Nat. Deor.* II. xxxvii

(1.) Adaptation of the bodies and of the instincts of animals to the laws of the material world. Of the organs of respiration, for example, and of the instinct of suction to the properties of the atmosphere; of the sensibility of the eye to the *momentum* of light, and of the structure of that organ to the laws of refraction; of the size and strength of animals and vegetables to the laws of gravitation and of cohesion.

I mentioned in the *first place*, the adaptation of the organs of respiration, and of the instinct of suction to the properties of the atmosphere. On this *relation* some ingenious reflections occur in the excellent work [on *Natural Theology*] of Dr. Paley, in which he has very properly laid great stress on the *period* when these organs were formed,—a period when no communication existed between the lungs and the atmosphere, and when, of course, their structure bore a reference to an order of things which was yet FUTURE. The passage I allude to forms a part of Chap. xiv., entitled, "Of Prospective Contrivances."

I mentioned, *secondly*, the adaptation of the *retina* to the *momentum* of light, one of the most astonishing facts (I may venture to assert) that falls within the sphere of our observation. Nor will this assertion appear extravagant to those who reflect for a moment, on one hand, upon the structure of the organ, which is incomparably more delicate than that of any other part of the body; and, on the other hand, on the astonishing velocity of light which carries it at the rate of about *two hundred thousand miles in a second* of time; that is, nearly a *million* of times greater than the velocity of a cannon ball. How inconceivably small must its particles be, and how nicely must their quantity of matter be adjusted to their velocity to produce a momentum sufficient to effect the sensitive power of the retina without injuring *that* or any other part of the eye! How beautifully is the same organ adapted to that property of light, in consequence of which it alters its course when it passes obliquely from one medium into another of different density, insomuch that the course of the visual rays through the humours of the eye, till they paint the image on the retina, may be traced on the same dioptrical principles on

which we explain the theory of the telescope and the microscope! This view of the mechanism of the eye appears more peculiarly striking, when we consider, as we just now did in the organs of respiration, the formation of the organ of sight in the womb of the mother, at a period when no communication exists between it and that element to which all its various parts have so manifest a reference.[1]

The *last* relation which I mentioned is that between the size and strength of animals and vegetables, and the laws of gravitation and cohesion. A very few slight remarks will suffice for the illustration of this instance of design, and of the inference which I wish to draw from the fact.

It is observed by Galileo that in similar bodies, engines and animals, the greater are more liable to accident than the less, and have a less relative strength in proportion to their magnitude. A greater column, for example, is in much greater danger of being broken by a fall than a similar small one. A man is in greater danger from accidents of this kind than a child. To account for this he shows that in similar bodies of the same texture the force which tends to break them increases in the greater bodies in a higher proportion than the force which tends to preserve them entire. It is owing to this, he observes, that what succeeds very well in a model is often found to fall to pieces by its own weight when it comes to be executed on a larger scale. From these principles it follows that there are necessarily limits in the works both of nature and art which they cannot surpass in magnitude. It is possible to conceive trees of so great a size that their branches should fall by their own weight. The larger animals (we know from the fact)[2]

[1] See Dr. Paley's *Natural Theology*, p. 277, [Chap. XIV. § iii.]

[2] "In the large sized animals, such as the bull and the elephant, the thickness both of their bones and muscles bears a greater proportion to the length of their limbs, than in the smaller animals, and they are therefore of a less elegant form. But nature has not carried this so far as to compensate for the disadvantage arising from the increase of size; for the greater animals have not the same proportional strength in relation to their bulk that the smaller animals have. It has been computed, (Halleri, *Elementa Physiologiæ*, Cap. IX. sect. ii.) that a flea can draw from seventy to eighty times its own weight, whereas

have not strength in proportion to their size; and if their size were much increased they would not only be exposed to perpetual accidents, but would, in a great measure, lose their power of motion.[1]

Under this head, too, we may remark the relation which the size of the human body bears to that of the other animals. There is a certain *common scale* on which man and the other animals that minister to his necessities seem to have been made, and which could not be departed from to any great extent without inconvenience; so that if the size of the human body were rendered either much larger or much smaller than it is, (that of other animals remaining the same,) the beautiful harmony of the globe would be in so far disturbed.

"Had man been of a stature much less than he enjoys," says Sir Gilbert Blane, in his *Lecture on Muscular Motion*, "he would not have possessed sufficient power over external objects to act up to those superior faculties of mind with which he is endowed. If nature had conferred on man only one half of his actual stature and strength, with the same powers of reason, we may venture to affirm, that he would not have carried his dominion over the globe to the same extent. As he is now constituted, his force is commensurate with things external."

These remarks may serve as an answer to the following questions of *Lucretius*:—

> "Denique cur homines tantos natura parare
> Non potuit, pedibus qui pontum per vada possent
> Transire, et magnos manibus divellere montes?"[2]

Indeed, the same answer was long ago given to this question by an English naturalist of the seventeenth century, (Dr. Nehemiah Grew.) "No other cause," he observes, "can be assigned why a man was not made five or ten times bigger, but his *relation* to the rest of the universe."

a horse cannot with ease draw more than three times his own weight."—Sir Gilbert Blane's *Lecture on Muscular Motion.*

[1] Muschenbroek, *Dissert. Phys. et Math.* p. 560.

[2] Lib. I. 200.

(2.) Adaptation of the bodies and instincts of animals to those particular climates and districts of the earth for which they are destined.—Of this remark I cannot recollect a better illustration than the following description of the *camel* by Dr. Robertson.*

"In the habitable parts of both Asia and Africa, some of the most fertile districts are separated from each other by such extensive tracts of barren sands, as seem to exclude the possibility of communication between them. In all these districts of Asia and Africa, where deserts are most frequent and extensive, the camel abounds. This is his proper station, and beyond this the sphere of his action does not extend far. He dreads alike the excesses of heat and cold, and does not agree even with the mild climate of our temperate zone. It is scarcely necessary for me to mention how beautifully this extraordinary animal is adapted to the particular station he occupies on the globe, by his persevering strength, by his moderation in the use of food, and by that singularity in his anatomical structure which enables him to lay in a stock of water sufficient for several days.—'In travelling through the desert,' says Mr. Volney, 'camels are chiefly employed, because they consume little, and carry a great load. His ordinary burden is about seven hundred and fifty pounds. His food whatever is given him, straw, thistles, the stones of dates, bran, barley, &c. With a pound of food and as much water he will travel for weeks. In the journey from Cairo to Suez, which is forty or forty-six hours, they neither eat nor drink; but these long fasts, if repeated often, wear them out. Their usual rate of travelling is very slow, hardly above two miles an hour. It is vain to push them, they will not quicken their pace; but if allowed some short rest, they will travel fifteen hours a day.'"[1]

(3.) The relations which animals and vegetables bear to each

* [*Historical Disquisition concerning India*, &c.]

[1] Of the natural economy of this animal, (which the Arabians call *the ship of the desert*,) and also of the mode in which he is trained by the art of man to his life of hardship and exertion, a particular account may be found in Buffon, Art. *Chameau et Dromadaire*.

other; the latter furnishing to the former salutary food in their healthful state, and useful remedies in the case of disease.

It will perhaps be said that these relations are the effect of accident; that the number of plants is infinite; and that it is not surprising that among this variety, experience should discover to us a few which have certain relations to the animal kingdom. But admitting this mode of reasoning to be good, what shall we say to those instincts which, independently of experience, direct an animal to its proper food, and to those remedies which are suited to its various diseases? The former circumstance is matter of daily remark, and the latter is well known to be equally certain.

(4.) The relations which different tribes of animals have to each other, one tribe being the natural prey of another, and each of them having their instruments of offence or defence provided accordingly.

(5.) The relations which the periodical instincts of migratory animals bear to the state of the season, and to such animal or vegetable productions in distant parts of the globe, as are destined to be their food.[1]

This view of the subject is peculiarly striking, when we consider the relations which almost all the parts of the universe bear to man. That our *faculties* are admirably adapted to our external circumstances has been often observed, particularly by Mr. Locke in the following passage:—

"The infinitely wise Contriver of us, and of all things about us, hath fitted our senses, faculties, and organs, to the conveniences of life, and to the business we have to do here. We are able by our senses to know and distinguish things, and to examine them so far as to apply them to our uses, and several ways to accommodate the exigencies of this life. We have insight enough into their admirable contrivances and wonderful effects, to admire and magnify the wisdom, power, and good-

[1] Ray, p. 128.

ness of their Author. But it appears not that God intended we should have a perfect, clear, and adequate knowledge of them; that perhaps is not in the comprehension of any finite being. We are furnished with faculties (dull and weak as they are) to discover enough in the creatures to lead us to the knowledge of the Creator, and the knowledge of our duty; and we are fitted well enough with abilities to provide for the conveniences of living;—these are our business in this world. But were our senses altered and made much quicker and acuter, the appearance and outward scheme of things would have quite another face to us, and I am apt to think would be inconsistent with our being, or at least wellbeing, in this part of the universe which we inhabit. He that considers how little our constitution is able to bear a remove into parts of this air, not much higher than that we commonly breathe in, will have reason to be satisfied that in this globe of earth allotted for our mansion, the all-wise Architect has suited our organs, and the bodies that are to affect them, one to another. If our sense of *hearing* were but one thousand times quicker than it is, how would a perpetual noise distract us; and we should in the quietest retirement be less able to sleep or meditate than in the middle of a sea-fight. Nay, if that most instructive of our senses, *seeing*, were in any man a thousand, or a hundred thousand times more acute than it is now by the best microscope, things several millions of times less than the smallest object of his sight now, would then be visible to his naked eyes, and so he would come nearer the discovery of the texture and motion of the minute parts of corporeal things, and in many of them probably get ideas of their internal constitutions; but then he would be in a quite different world from other people,—nothing would appear the same to him and others,—the visible ideas of everything would be different; so that I doubt whether he and the rest of men could discourse concerning the objects of sight, or have any communication about colours, their appearances being so wholly different; and perhaps such a quickness and tenderness of sight could not endure bright sunshine, or so much as open day light, nor take in but a very small part of

any object at once, and that too only at a very near distance. And if, by the help of such microscopical eyes, (if I may so call them,) a man should penetrate farther than ordinary into the secret composition and radical texture of bodies, he would not make any great advantage by the change, if such an acute sight would not serve to conduct him to the market and exchange, if he could not see things he was to avoid at a convenient distance, or distinguish things he was to do with, by those sensible qualities others do. He that was sharp-sighted enough to see the configuration of the minute particles of the spring of a clock, and observe on what peculiar structure and impulse its elastic motion depends, would no doubt discover something very admirable; but if eyes so framed could not view at once the hand and the characters of the hour-plate, and thereby discover at a distance what o'clock it was, their owner could not be much benefited by that acuteness, which, whilst it discovered the secret contrivance of the parts of the machine, made him lose its use."[1]

Nor is it merely our perceptive faculties which have a reference to our situation. The external objects with which we are surrounded are so accommodated to our capacities of enjoyment, and the relations which exist between our frame and that of external nature are so numerous, in comparison of what we perceive in the case of other animals, as to authorize us to conclude, that it was chiefly with a view to our happiness and improvement that the arrangements of this lower world were made. The subject is so infinite that I should lose myself if I attempted any illustration of it. I shall content myself with mentioning the innumerable relations between our senses, and the natural objects with which we are surrounded; between the smell and the perfumes of the vegetable world; between the taste and the endless profusion of luxuries which the earth, the air, and the waters afford; between the ear and the melodies of the birds; between the eye and all the beauties and glories of the visible creation. There is something I think peculiarly remarkable in the adaptation of the music of birds

[1] Locke's *Works*, Vol. II. p. 15, *et seq.*—[*Essay*, B. II. ch. xxiii. § 12.]

to the human ear. It seems to give pleasure to none of the quadrupeds; nor is it even certain if the music of one species of birds gives pleasure to another; for it has been asserted by some late naturalists,[1] that those of them who are most remarkable for their powers of imitation, (the linnet for example,) are as apt to imitate sounds which are harsh and disagreeable, as the most exquisite tones of music. But man receives pleasure from them all, and the variety of their notes would seem almost to have been bestowed on them to form a concert for the gratification of his ear.

. . . . . "Up springs the lark,
Shrill voiced and loud, the messenger of morn;
Ere yet the shadows fly, he mounting sings
Amid the dawning clouds, and from their haunts
Calls up the tuneful nations. Every copse
Deep-tangled, tree irregular, and bush
Bending with dewy moisture, o'er the heads
Of the coy quiristers that lodge within,
Are prodigal of harmony. The thrush
And woodlark, o'er the kind contending throng
Superior heard, run through the sweetest length
Of notes; when listening Philomela deigns
To let them joy, and purposes in thought
Elate, to make her night excel their day.
The blackbird whistles from the thorny brake,
The mellow bullfinch answers from the grove;
Nor are the linnets, o'er the flowery furze
Pour'd out profusely, silent. Join'd to these
Innumerous songsters, in the fresh'ning shade
Of new sprung leaves, their modulations mix
Mellifluous. The jay, the rook, the daw,
And each harsh pipe, discordant heard alone,
Aid the full concert, while the stock-dove breathes
A melancholy murmur through the whole." *

Some naturalists have taken notice, as a curious circumstance, of that instinct which attracts the different tribes of singing birds to the habitations of men. If there is a cottage in a forest they all assemble in its neighbourhood. A very ingenious author, M. de St. Pierre, tells us that he travelled

[1] Particularly by the late Honourable Daines Barrington.

* [Thomson, *Seasons*, Spring, 587.]

more than six hundred leagues in the forests of Russia without seeing any small birds, excepting in the neighbourhood of the villages. He mentions likewise, that when he was in Russian Finland he sometimes travelled twenty leagues in a day without meeting either with villages or birds. Wherever they perceived the latter they were sure that they were near an inhabited country. Garcilasso de la Vega informs us, that his father, having been detached from Peru with a company of Spaniards to make discoveries beyond the Cordilleras, was in danger of perishing from hunger amidst their valleys and quagmires, till at last he perceived a flight of parrots, which made him suspect that he was near the habitations of men. He accordingly followed the direction in which they flew, and came at last, after incredible hardships, to an Indian settlement.

It has also been observed that the musical powers of which I have been speaking are confined to the birds which inhabit the fields and the woods. They would have been thrown away on those tribes which frequent the ocean, not only as they are removed from the ordinary haunts of men, but as the songs which are the most pleasing to the ear would have been lost amidst the noise of that turbulent element. Such birds have in general a piercing scream, by which they are enabled to make themselves mutually heard, notwithstanding the noise of the wind and waters.[1]

There is another view of nature, which tends remarkably to illustrate that unity of design in the universe which is the foundation of our belief of the unity of God; to trace the *analogies* which are observable in the structure of different tribes of animals, and even between the animal and the vegetable kingdoms; or to trace the *analogy* which is observable among many of the laws of nature in the material world.

(1.) Of the analogy in the anatomical structure of different tribes of animals, the following passage of Buffon contains a very pleasing illustration:—

[1] *Les Etudes de la Nature*, &c. Tom. III. p. 70.

"Take the skeleton of a man, incline the bones of the pelvis, shorten those of the thighs, legs, and arms; join the phalanges of the fingers and toes; lengthen the jaws by shortening the frontal bones; and lastly, extend the spine of the back. This skeleton would no longer represent that of a man, it would be the skeleton of a horse. For by lengthening the back bone and the jaws the number of the vertebræ, ribs, and teeth would be increased, and it is only by the number of these bones, and by the prolongation, contraction, and junction of others, that the skeleton of a horse differs from that of a man. The ribs which are essential to the figure of animals are found equally in men, in quadrupeds, in birds, in fishes, and even in the turtle. The foot of the horse, so apparently different from the hand of man, is composed of similar bones, and at the extremity of each finger we have the same small bone resembling the shoe of a horse which bounds the foot of that animal. Raise the skeletons of quadrupeds, from the ape kind to the mouse, upon their hind legs, and compare them with the skeleton of a man, the mind will be instantly struck with the uniformity of structure and design observed in the formation of the whole group. This uniformity is so constant, and the gradations from one species to another are so imperceptible, that to discover the marks of their discrimination requires the most minute attention. Even the bones of the tail will make but a slight impression on the observer. The tail is only a prolongation of the *os coccygis*, or rump-bone, which is short in man. The ourang-outang and true apes have no tail, and in the baboon and several other quadrupeds the tail is exceedingly short. Thus, in the creation of animals the Supreme Being seems to have employed only one great idea, and at the same time to have diversified it in every possible manner, that man might have an opportunity of admiring equally the magnificence of the execution, and the simplicity of the design."*

(2.) A further instance of the same unity of design occurs in the analogy between the animal and the vegetable kingdoms.

* [Translation in Smellie's *Philosophy of Natural History*, Vol. I. pp. 54, 55.]

It is sufficient to mention this without any comment, as it has been matter of common remark in all ages of the world, and has furnished to poets many of their most interesting and agreeable images. In modern times it has attracted the attention of some of our most eminent philosophers, who have not only availed themselves of its assistance as a principle of botanical classification, but have connected it with some very curious speculations concerning the order and economy of nature.

(3.) To all this we may add the analogy among many of the phenomena and laws of the material world; a satisfactory proof of which may be derived from the effects which philosophical habits and scientific pursuits have in familiarizing the mind to the order of nature, and in improving its penetration and sagacity in anticipating those parts of it which are yet unknown. A man conversant with the phenomena of physics and chemistry is much more likely than a stranger to these studies, to form probable conjectures concerning those laws of nature which still remain to be examined. There is a certain *style* (if I may use the expression) in the operations of the Great Author of all Things; something which everywhere announces, amidst a boundless variety of detail, an inimitable unity and harmony of design; and in the perception of which, what we commonly call *philosophical sagacity* seems chiefly to consist. It is this which bestows an inestimable value on the conjectures and queries of such a philosopher as Sir Isaac Newton.

This view of *the unity of design*, displayed in the works of creation, becomes more peculiarly impressive, when we consider that evidences of it may be traced as far as the inquiries of philosophers have hitherto reached. The ancients in general supposed that the phenomena of the heavens were regulated by laws perfectly unlike those which obtain within the circle of our experience, although I have somewhere met with the following maxim, which I think was ascribed to the Persian Magi—*συμπαθῆ εἶναι τὰ ἄνω τοῖς κάτω.* [See above, *Elements*, &c., Vol. II. p. 292.]

The modern discoveries have shown clearly that this really

is the case; and indeed it was a conjecture *a priori* that this probably was true, that led the way to the doctrine of gravitation. Every subsequent discovery has confirmed and extended the truth. It has been found that comets, in their most distant excursions from the sun, continue subject to this law, and that, by attending to the various disturbances of their motions arising from their gravitation to the planets, the periods of their return to the planetary regions may be predicted within astonishingly narrow limits. It has been found that the same law extends to that telescopical planet which has been lately discovered to belong to our system, and the quantity of matter it contains has been computed from the motion of its satellites, by an application of a theory founded on the most familiar of all the facts we know, that a heavy body on our earth, when projected into the air, descends again to the ground.

Nor is it only the more general laws of terrestrial bodies which extend to the more remote parts of the universe. There is some ground for suspecting, that the particular arrangements of things on the surfaces of the different planets are not wholly unlike those which we observe on our own. I before took notice of that relation which the size and strength of animals and vegetables seem to bear to the laws of gravitation and cohesion. Supposing, then, the other planets to be furnished with animals and vegetables similar to those on the surface of our earth, and supposing, at the same time, the same laws of cohesion and of other attractions which obtain here to extend over our system, it was necessary that the force of gravity at the surfaces of the different planets should not differ very widely from one standard. Now, as we find from the fact, contrary to all expectation, that at the surfaces of the planets which differ from each other the most in magnitude, there is a wonderfully narrow limit within which the force of gravity varies, is it not a natural inference that they are fitted for the accommodation of animated beings not very different from those with which we are acquainted? At the surface of Jupiter, though he be several hundred times greater than our earth, the force of gravity is little more than double of that of terrestrial bodies; and at the surface of

Saturn, it is only about one-fourth greater than at the surface of the earth.[1]

Amusing and interesting as these physical speculations may be to the mind, it is still more delightful to trace that uniformity of design which obtains in the moral world. To compare the arts of human life with the instincts of the brutes, and the instincts of the different tribes of brutes with each other; and to remark, amidst the wonderful variety of means which are employed to accomplish the same ends, a certain analogy characterize them all; or to observe, in the minds of different individuals of our own species, the workings of the same affections and passions, manifesting, among men of every age and of every country, the kindred features of humanity. It is this which gives the great charm to what we call *nature* in epic and dramatic compositions; when the poet speaks a language to which every heart is an echo, and which, amidst all the effects of education and fashion in modifying and disguising the principles of our constitution, reminds all the various classes of readers or of spectators, of the existence of those moral ties which unite us to each other and to our common Parent.

I have only to add farther, before leaving this subject, that the various remarks and reasonings which I have offered on the two general principles of our nature formerly mentioned, are not to be considered as forming any part of the argument for the existence of God, which, as I already said, is an immediate and necessary consequence of these principles. What I had in view was, not to confirm this important truth by reasoning, but to obviate the sceptical cavils which have been raised against it. When the principles of our nature are allowed to follow their own course, without being diverted from it by the prejudices of superstition or of false philosophy, they produce their proper effect on the mind of the uncultivated savage, as much as of the enlightened citizen. "How do you know," said a traveller to a poor Arab of the desert, "that there is a God?" "In the same manner," he replied, "that I trace the footsteps

[1] Maclaurin's *Account of Sir Isaac Newton's Philosophical Discoveries*, B. III. chap. v. sect. 5.

of an animal by the prints which it leaves upon the sand."—"Is it not fitting," said a savage of Sumatra to his companion, showing him a watch that had been made in Europe, "that a people such as we should be the slaves of a nation capable of forming such a machine? The sun," he added, "is a machine of the same nature." "And who winds him up?" said his companion. "Who," replied he, "but Allah!"[1]

If any exception to the universality of these religious impressions among mankind is to be found, it is not among savages we are to look for it, but in populous and commercial and artificial societies of men, where the voice of nature is drowned amid the bustle of business, or the hurry of dissipation; where our earliest and most susceptible years are passed among the productions of human art, and the attention is diverted from those physical appearances, which are stamped with the obvious marks of Divine power and wisdom. Nothing, in truth, banishes moral impressions from the thoughts so much as the artificial objects with which we are everywhere surrounded in populous and cultivated countries, particularly in large commercial cities; because the curiosity is too deeply engrossed by the productions of human skill and industry to have leisure to follow its *natural* direction. Hence it is that such impressions, however long banished from the mind, never fail to revive when we retire from the haunts of men to converse with nature in solitude. What we call the *love of nature*, is in fact the love and admiration of the Deity. The enthusiasm with which some men survey the endless vicissitudes which the spectacle of the universe exhibits, is nothing else than the devotional temper moderated and repressed by the slight veil which sensible objects interpose between us and their author. In those deep and savage recesses where human art has never trode, this veil is in some measure removed; every thing around us appears unchanged and fresh from the hand of the Creator, and we seem to be conscious of his more immediate presence.

"Præsentiorem et conspicimus Deum
Per invias rupes, fera per juga,

[1] Marsden's *History of Sumatra*.

Clivosque præruptos, sonantes
Inter aquas, nemorumque noctem;
Quam si repostus sub trabe citreâ
Fulgeret auro, et Phidiacâ manu."*

SECT. III.—CONCLUSION OF THE ARGUMENT FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD.

The observations which have been made not only establish the *existence* of a Deity, but contain the evidences of his unity, of his power, and of his wisdom. Of these we justly say that they are *infinite;* that is, that our imagination can set no bounds to them, and that our conceptions of them always rise in proportion as our own faculties are cultivated and enlarged, and as our knowledge of the universe becomes more extensive. Some of the earlier and more scholastic of our modern writers on natural religion give a long enumeration of what they call the *Divine Attributes*, which they divide into the *natural, the intellectual, and the moral.* Under the first head, they comprehend the unity of the Deity, his self-existence, his spirituality, his omnipotence, his immutability, his eternity;—under the second, his knowledge and his wisdom; and under the third, his justice and his goodness; and of all these attributes they treat in a systematical manner. I own I do not approve of this view of the subject; or at least I do not think I could adopt it with advantage here; I shall therefore confine myself to a few observations on the evidences of the *Divine goodness and justice*, those attributes which render the Deity the proper object of religious worship and adoration.

Before, however, entering on this subject, I think it proper to take notice of the historical question concerning the priority of monotheism or of polytheism, in the order of human investigation. I shall afterwards collect together a few miscellaneous remarks which in the course of this chapter escaped my recollection while treating of those heads under which they ought

* [Gray; *Alcaic Ode, written in the Album of the Grande Chartreuse.*— *Works*, by Mitford, 4to edition, Vol. I. p. 223.]

to have been introduced. For the sake of greater distinctness I shall divide the section into two parts.

(PART 1.)

With respect to the priority of Monotheism or Polytheism, two opinions on the question have been proposed. The one supposes *monotheism* to be agreeable to the first suggestions of the mind, and *polytheism* to result from a combination of the conclusions formed by different persons in different situations. The other supposes *polytheism* to arise necessarily from those *partial* conceptions of the universe, to which our faculties are limited in the infancy of reason and experience, and *monotheism* to be the slow and gradual result of more enlarged and philosophical views. The former opinion is supported by Mr. Ferguson, in his *Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy;* the latter by Mr. Hume, in his *Natural History of Religion.*

"In every nation or tribe," says Ferguson, "the providence of God was supposed to take its character from the circumstances in which it was employed. In maritime situations the Deity was conceived as monarch of the sea, and director of storms. Within land he was conceived as the patron of husbandmen and of shepherds, the ruler of seasons, and the power on which man must depend for the increase of his herds, and for the returns of his harvest.

"In no instance, perhaps, did the people of any one description or determinate manner of life originally conceive more than one God. But the accounts of what different nations believed, when collated together, seemed to make up a catalogue of separate deities; and what every nation apart intended for one, when reports were accumulated from different quarters, was mistaken for many.

"The spirit with which these reports of a God acknowledged in one nation, different from the God who was acknowledged in another, were mutually received by their respective votaries, was various in different instances.

"In some instances the pretensions of one Deity were sup-

posed to be consistent with those of another, and the Gods reconcilable. Upon this supposition every nation worshipped its own, without any supposed disparagement to the God of its neighbour, and without animosity to his worshippers.

"In other instances pretensions were considered as inconsistent; deities were stated as rival powers; and nations waged continual war under the banners of their respective gods."[1]

On the other hand, it is maintained by Hume,* (and I confess I think with much more probability,) that theism is the slow result of philosophical views of the universe—connecting different physical events together as parts of *one* system conspiring to *one* end; and that as long as we attend to detached and insulated appearances only, polytheism offers itself as the most natural creed; leading men to apprehend *one* God of the winds, another of the waters, a third of the woods, &c., presiding over and communicating motion to the different parts of the material world. The prevalence of polytheism in the world is a proof of this; and I have little doubt that this would have continued to be the religion of the multitude in all countries, had not the idolatrous tendency of the uninformed understanding been corrected by the light of Divine revelation.[2]

When I speak, however, of the prevalence of polytheism in the world, I would be always understood to mean its prevalence among the *multitude;* for it is more than probable, that in all

[1] Vol. I. p. 169.—[Part I. ch. ii. § 15.]

* [*Essays*, Vol. II.: *The Natural History of Religion*, sect. i.]

[2] Two very high authorities, however, may be quoted in favour of the opposite opinion, Sir Isaac Newton and Sir William Jones. "The primeval religion of *Iran*," says the last of these writers, "was that which Newton calls the *oldest* (and it may justly be called the noblest) of all religions; a firm belief that one Supreme God made the world by his power, and continually governed it by his providence; a pious fear, love, and adoration of him; a due reverence for parents and aged persons; a fraternal affection for the whole human species; and a compassionate tenderness even for the brute creation."—Jones's *Dissertation on the Persians.*

Does not the purity and sublimity of this creed, both in its theological and ethical principles, suppose a degree of cultivation, both intellectual and moral, altogether incompatible with the condition of man in the earlier stages of society? The passage, however, is nobly conceived and beautifully expressed, and contains, I have little doubt, a faithful description of the religious sentiments of many wise and good men in the heathen world.

ages and countries there have been *some* individuals whose minds were enlightened by the simple and sublime belief of the unity of God. Thus, among the ancient Greeks and Romans, although the established religion and the popular persuasion was undoubtedly polytheism, the clearest evidence may be produced that the philosophical creed was very different. The most enlightened writers, indeed, frequently expressed themselves in conformity to vulgar prejudices; and many of them probably *believed* that there exist a variety of beings superior to man, who have an influence over human affairs, but who act in subordination to the will of the Supreme God. This belief is not to be confounded with polytheism; for it is perfectly consistent with the doctrine of the unity of the Deity, to suppose that he sometimes acts by subordinate ministers. The frequent application which the classical writers make of the word *Deus*, is apt to mislead us upon this subject; but that word conveyed to the Romans a very different idea from what we annex to the corresponding word in our language. Sometimes they employed it to express the Supreme Being; sometimes subordinate minds acting in obedience to his will. In the following sentence it is used in both these senses:—"*Deos* alios in terra, alios in luna, alios in reliquas mundi partes spargens, *Deus* quasi serebat."[1]

That the unity of the Deity was the philosophical belief among the Romans, appears from the testimony of their most eminent writers. The following passages are from the works of Cicero:—

"Princeps ille Deus, qui omnem hunc mundum regit, sicut animus humanus id corpus cui præpositus est."[?][2]—"Nec vero Deus ipse alio modo intelligi potest, nisi mens soluta quædam et libera, segregata ab omni concretione mortali, omnia sentiens et movens."[3]—"Esse præstantem aliquam æternamque naturam, et eam suspiciendam admirandamque hominum generi, pulchritudo mundi ordoque rerum cœlestium cogit con-

[1] Cicero quoted by Bolingbroke; *Philosophical Works*, Vol. V. p. 264.—[The passage of Cicero is from the fragment *De Universo*, cap. xiii.; but by Bolingbroke it is inaccurately quoted. —*Ed.*]

[2] *Somn. Scip.* sect. iii.

[3] *Tusc. Quæst.* Lib. I. [cap. xxvii.]

fiteri."[1]—"Omnes gentes una lex, et sempiterna et immortalis continebit; unusque erit, quasi magister et imperator omnium, Deus."[2]

Seneca expressly informs us, that all the different names given by the Romans to the Deity were only to be considered as descriptive of the different characters in which he appears to us from his works. "Quid aliud est Natura, quam Deus et Divina Ratio toti mundo et partibus ejus inserta? Quoties voles, tibi licet aliter hunc auctorem rerum nostrarum compellare; et Jovem illum optimum et maximum ritè dices, et tonantem et statorem. Hunc eundem et fatum si dixeris, non mentieris; nam cum Fatum nihil aliud sit quam series implexa causarum, ille est prima omnium causa ex quâ cæteræ pendent. Quæcunque voles illi nomina proprie aptabis, vim aliquam effectumque cœlestium rerum continentia: tot appellationes ejus possunt esse, quot munera;"[3] and in another place: "Ne hoc quidem crediderunt (antiqui) Jovem, qualem in capitolio et in cæteris ædibus colimus, mittere manu fulmina; sed eundem, quem nos, Jovem intelligunt: custodem rectoremque universi; animum ac spiritum mundani hujus operis dominum et artificem; cui nomen omne convenit."[4]

I shall only add to these passages the following quotation from the *Isis and Osiris* of Plutarch. "Care should be taken not to transform, dissolve, and scatter the Divine Nature into rivers, winds, vegetables, or bodily forms and motions. . . . . This would be as ridiculous as to imagine that the sails, the cables, the rigging, and the anchor, are the pilot, or that the thread, the shuttle, and the woof, are the weaver. Such senseless notions are an indignity to the heavenly powers, whom they blaspheme, while they give the name of Gods to beings of an insensible, inanimate, and corruptible nature. . . . . Nothing that is without a soul, nothing that is material, and to be perceived by our senses, can be God. Nor yet must we imagine that there are different Gods, according to the different countries of Greeks and barbarians, northern and southern

[1] *De Divin.* Lib. II. cap. lxxii.
[2] Frag. *De Repub.* Lib. III.
[3] *De Benef.* Lib. IV. cap. vii.
[4] *Nat. Quæst.* Lib. II. cap. xlv.

nations. As the sun is common to all the world, though called by different names in different places, so there is but one sole Supreme Mind or Reason, and one and the same Providence that governs the world, though he is worshipped under different names, and has appointed some inferior powers for his ministers."*

Nor is it only the *philosophers* of antiquity who thought in this manner. It is justly observed by the Chevalier Ramsay, that "whoever reads Homer and Virgil with a proper attention will see, that, notwithstanding the wild flights of their imagination, and the indecent allegories by which they sometimes dishonour the Divine Nature, there is one general principle running through all their fables, that there is one Supreme God, whom they everywhere call the Father, and the Sovereign Lord of Gods and Men, the Architect of the World, and the Prince and Governor of the Universe."—"Poetry," says this author, "deifies all the various parts of nature, and gives spirits to bodies, as well as body to spirits. It expresses the operations and properties of matter by the actions and passions of such invisible powers as the pagans supposed to be directors of all the motions and events that we see in the universe. The poets pass in a moment from allegory to the literal sense, and from the literal sense to allegory; from real Gods to fabulous deities; and this occasions that jumble in their images, that absurdity in their fictions, and that indecorum in their expressions, which are so justly condemned by the philosophers. Notwithstanding, however, this multiplication of inferior deities, the poets of antiquity in general believed that there is but one only Supreme God." Of this assertion very strong proofs are produced by Ramsay in his *Discourse upon the Theology and Mythology of the Ancients*, annexed to his *Travels of Cyrus*. The following passages deserve to be added to those he has quoted. [Thus Virgil:]

> "Accipite ergo animis, atque hæc mea figite dicta;
> Quæ Phœbo Pater omnipotens, mihi Phœbus Apollo
> Prædixit, vobis Furiarum ego maxima pando."[1]

* [Plutarchi *Opera*, editiones Xylandri, Tom. II. pp. 377, 378.] [1] *Æneid*, iii. 250.

Upon which verses *Servius* remarks, that even Apollo (he who among the Pagan deities was in chief esteem for his prophetic knowledge) is said to derive his knowledge from the Supreme Being. "Notandum Apollinem quæ dicit à Jove cognoscere."

[So Horace:]

. . . . "Scimus ut impios
Titanas, immanemque turmam
Fulmine sustulerit caduco,
Qui terram inertem, qui mare temperat
Ventosum; et urbes, regnaque tristia
Divosque, mortalesque turmas,
Imperio regit UNUS æquo."[1]

[And again:]

"Quid prius dicam solitis parentis
Laudibus; qui res hominum ac deorum,
Qui mare et terras, variisque mundum
Temperat horis?

"Unde nil majus generatur IPSO:
Nec viget quicquam simile aut secundum:
Proximos ILLI tamen occupavit
Pallas honores."[2]

The most remarkable passage, however, I recollect in any of the ancient poets for my present purpose, is that in Lucan's *Pharsalia*, where the following lines are put into the mouth of Cato, in reply to Labienus and others who advised him to consult the oracle of Jupiter Ammon in Lybia.

"Hæremus cuncti superis, temploque tacente,
Nil facimus non sponte Dei. Nec vocibus ullis
Numen eget; dixitque semel nascentibus auctor,
Quidquid scire licet. Sterilesne elegit arenas,
Ut caneret paucis, mersitque hoc pulvere verum?
Estne Dei sedes, nisi terra, et pontus, et aer,
Et cœlum et virtus?—Superos quid quærimus ultra?
Jupiter est quodcumque vides, quocumque moveris."[3]

In farther confirmation of this doctrine, concerning the religious opinions of the ancient philosophers, a very ingenious (and to my mind most convincing) argument is deduced by Dr.

[1] *Carm.* Lib. III. Od. iv. [2] *Carm.* Lib. I. Od. xii. [3] Lib. ix. 573.

Cudworth from the reasonings of the *Epicurean school*, which, as he observes, were levelled, *not* against the supposition of a plurality of Deities, but against the belief of *one* Supreme God, everywhere present, and everywhere exerting the active energy of a superintending providence.

> "Quis regere Immensi Summam, quis habere Profundi
> Indu manu validas potis est moderanter habenas?
> Quis pariter Cœlos omneis convertere; et omneis
> Ignibus ætheriis terras suffire feraceis;
> Omnibus inque locis esse omni tempore præsto?" *

"In like manner," continues Dr. Cudworth, "when Epicurus pursues the same argument further in Cicero, alleging, that, though such a thing were possible, yet it would be, notwithstanding, absolutely inconsistent with the happiness of any being, he still proceeds on the same hypothesis of one sole and single Deity. . . . . As Epicurus here speaks singularly, so the trouble of this theocracy could not be thought so very great to a multitude of co-ordinate Deities, when parcelled out among them, but would rather seem to be but a sportful and delightful divertisement to each of them. Wherefore," concludes this very learned and profound writer, "it is manifest that such an idea as we have declared of the unity of God, is a thing which the ancient atheists, under the times of paganism, were not unacquainted with, but principally directed their force against."[1]

I must not leave this fundamental article of Natural Religion, (the Existence of the Deity,) without taking notice of the support it derives from the *universal consent* of all ages and nations.† However contaminated with error, however debased by the follies of superstition and credulity, the belief of the existence of supernatural and invisible beings presiding over human affairs will be found to be inseparable from the human mind; and, in so far as this belief obtains, atheism is excluded.

* [Lucretius, Lib. II. 1094.]

[1] *Intellectual System*, pp. 207, 208; [Birch's edit. p. 208.—Book I. chap. iv. § 10.]

† [See above, *Elements*, &c., Vol. II. chap. i. sect. 3, p. 58, *seq.*]

"Ex tot generibus," says Cicero, "nullum est animal, præter hominem, quod habeat notitiam aliquam Dei: ipsisque in hominibus nulla gens est neque tam immansueta, neque tam fera, quæ non, etiamsi ignoret, qualem habere Deum deceat, tamen habendum sciat."[1] Now unquestionably the universal concurrence of mankind in the belief of any proposition is a strong presumption, or rather a positive evidence, that this belief has a foundation in the principles of our nature; and if we find these natural suggestions of the mind confirmed by the authority of the most enlightened philosophers, and above all confirmed by the conclusions of our own reason, we have all the evidence that possibly can be brought in support of any truth whatever. Indeed I apprehend there is no truth in the whole circle of human knowledge which so many different kinds of proof conspire to establish, as that which has been now under our consideration:—"Testimonium populorum atque gentium," says Lactantius, "in una hac re non dissidentium:"*—and in this manner reasoned the best philosophers of old. "What seems true to *most* wise men," as Aristotle has excellently observed, "is very probable; what most men, both wise and unwise, assent to, doth still more resemble truth; but what men generally consent in hath the highest probability, and approaches near to demonstration, so near that it may pass for ridiculous arrogance, or for intolerable obstinacy and perverseness to deny it.—A man," he adds, "may assume what seems true to the wise, if it do not contradict the common opinion of mankind."[2]

The following passages are extracted from different writers of antiquity. They all express the same idea, the presumption for the existence of the Deity arising from *universal consent.* But on a subject of so interesting a nature it is pleasing to place the same truth in various lights, as well as to remark a coincidence of sentiment among those enlarged and cultivated minds which have devoted their talents to the improvement and happiness of the human race.

"Multum dare solemus," says Seneca, "præsumptioni om-

[1] *De Legibus*, I. viii. * [*Institutiones*, Lib. I. cap. ii. § 4.] [2] *Topica* I. viii. [or x.]

nium hominum. Apud nos veritatis argumentum est,—*aliquid omnibus videri;* tanquam Deos esse, inter alia, sic colligimus, —quod omnibus de Diis opinio insita est; nec ulla gens usquam est adeo extra leges moresque projecta, ut non aliquos Deos credat."[1]

To the same purpose Cicero: "Firmissimum hoc afferri videtur, cur Deos esse credamus:—quod nulla gens tam fera, nemo omnium tam sit immanis, cujus mentem non imbuerit Deorum opinio. Multi de diis prava sentiunt, id enim vitioso more effici solet; omnes tamen esse vim, et naturam Divinam arbitrantur. Una autem in re consensio omnium gentium lex naturæ putanda est."[2]

In the following passage of Maximus Tyrius,* the fact on which the argument proceeds is stated with great simplicity and force.

"In such a contest and tumult and disagreement, (*about other matters of opinion,*) you may see this one law and speech [reason ?] acknowledged by common accord,—that there is one God, the King and Father of All, and many Gods, the children of God and ruling together with him. This the Greek says, and this the barbarian says; and the inhabitant of the continent, and the islander; and the wise and the unwise."[3]

"If you search the world," says Plutarch, "you may find cities without walls, without letters, without kings, without money; but no one ever saw a city without a Deity, without a temple, or without some form of worship."†

In the passages now quoted their several authors take for granted that the general consent of mankind in admitting any proposition affords a strong presumption that the proposition is true. And that this is a just principle of reasoning appears (among various other considerations) from this:—that "Truth is *one* thing, while Errors are numberless, and every man has a different." I select this consideration in preference to the

[1] *Epistolæ*, cvii. [cxvii.]
[2] *Tusc. Disp.* I. xiii.
* [*Dissertatio*, Vulgo, i., Davisio xvii. § 5.—See above, *Elements*, vol. ii. p. 60.]
[3] See Barrow's *Sermons*.
† [*Adversus Colotem; Opera*, editiones Xylandri, Tom. II. p. 1125.]

others, because the remark is made by Mr. Hume himself,* the most sceptical of all writers. When we find, therefore, a number of unconnected individuals, all led to the same conclusion by different processes of reasoning, the presumption that the conclusion is true is strengthened in a proportion indefinitely great; and in like manner, when among an infinite variety of discordant systems that have arisen in different ages and countries, we find some opinions common to them all, we are inevitably led to consider these opinions as possessing the highest evidence by which any truth can possibly be supported. We may add to this observation, that when among an infinite variety of rites and ceremonies we trace universally the operation of certain common affections and emotions, we have a demonstration that these affections and emotions form a constituent part of the nature of man.

I am aware of an objection that may be stated to this doctrine, that there are some articles of belief universally received by mankind in ages of ignorance, which come to be as generally regarded as mere prejudices in the progress of human reason. Such, for example, is the belief that the earth is at rest, and the sun in motion;[1] and in general, all those prejudices called by Lord Bacon *Idola Tribus*. It may be supposed, therefore, that, for anything we know to the contrary, the case may one day be the same with our belief of the existence of a Deity.

In answer to this objection I would observe, that wherever a prejudice is found to obtain universally among mankind in any stage of society, this prejudice must have some foundation in the general principles of our nature, and must proceed upon some *truth* or *fact* inaccurately apprehended, or erroneously judged of. The suspense of judgment, therefore, which is proper with respect to particular opinions till they are once examined, can never justify scepticism with respect to the general principles or laws of the human mind. Our belief of the sun's motion is not a conclusion to which we are fairly led by any such principle or law, but an inference rashly drawn from the

* [See his *Essays*, Vol. II.; *Inquiry concerning the Principles of Morals*, sect. i.]

[1] See Trembley, *Sur les Préjugés*, p. 21.

perceptions of sense, which do not warrant such an inference. All that we see is, that there is a relative change of place between us and the sun; and this fact, which is made known to us by our senses, no subsequent discovery of philosophy pretends to disprove. It is not, therefore, the evidence of external perception which is overturned by the Copernican system, but *a judgment* or inference of the understanding, of the rashness of which every person must be fully sensible the moment he is made to reflect with due attention on the circumstances of the case. In other words, the Copernican system not only informs us of the real constitution of the universe, but satisfies us with respect to the *grounds* of this universal prejudice; and the doctrine which it substitutes for our first crude conclusions on the subject, is founded, not on any process of reasoning *a priori*, but on the demonstrable inconsistency of these conclusions with the various phenomena which our perceptions present to us. Had Copernicus, like some of the sophists of old, not only asserted the stability of the earth, but that no such thing as *motion* exists in the universe, his theory would have been perfectly analogous to that of Berkeley, and no answer to it could have been devised more pertinent and philosophical than that which Plato [?] is said to have given to the same paradox in the mouth of Zeno, by rising up and walking before his eyes. We are entitled, therefore, to dispute the similarity of the cases, till some prejudice is pointed out as universal as the belief of the existence of a Deity, from which prejudice such a belief could have arisen.

Another objection to the argument for the existence of a Deity drawn from *universal consent*, is founded on absurd tenets and extravagant ceremonies sanctioned by the religious creeds of all ages and nations. "Examine," says Mr. Hume, "the religious principles which have prevailed in the world, you will scarcely be persuaded that they are anything but sick men's dreams; or perhaps will regard them more as the playsome whimsies of monkeys in man's shape, than the serious, positive, dogmatical asseverations of a being who dignifies himself with the title of rational." . . . "To oppose the torrent of scholastic religion by

such feeble maxims as these; that it is impossible for the same thing to be and not to be; that the whole is greater than a part; that two and three make five; is pretending to stop the ocean with a bulrush."* And hence this ingenious writer finds himself obliged to conclude, that "the whole is a riddle, an enigma, an inexplicable mystery, and that doubt, uncertainty, and suspense appear the only result of our most accurate scrutiny on this subject."†

In a former work I attempted to reply to Mr. Hume's reasonings on this head, and even endeavoured to deduce, from the circumstances on which he founds his objections, a new argument for the being of a Deity; inasmuch as the absurd tenets and extravagant ceremonies which men are taught to reverence when they are connected with their religious belief, prove how irresistible the evidence must be of that fundamental principle, by means of which they lay hold of the understanding and the heart.[1] And it was in this manner, I apprehend, that Lord Bacon felt, when he said that he "had rather believe all the fables in the Legend, and the Talmud, and the Alcoran, than that this universal frame is without a Mind."‡ Or, in other words, that there was no proposition, how absurd soever, to which he could not more easily *give* his assent, than he could *withhold* it from this truth, proclaimed to him at once by every part of the universe.

To one who considers the subject in this light, the history even of the errors and follies of superstition becomes interesting and instructive, and instead of justifying the suggestions of scepticism, throws a new lustre on the evidences of religion; and, while it teaches him to regard not only with indulgence, but with reverence, whatever tenets and observances are sanctified to other men by all the best feelings of the heart, it cherishes in his own mind that pure and undefiled religion which worships God in spirit and in truth.

* [*Natural History of Religion*, Sect. xi.]

† [Ibid. Sect. xv. and last.]

[1] *Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind*, Vol. I. pp. 366-369, 6th edit.—[*Works*, Vol. II. pp. 319-321.]

‡ [*Essays*, xvi. *Of Atheism*.]

(PART 2.)

I formerly mentioned some circumstances which may help to explain why the idea of a God, although it forces itself irresistibly on every serious and reflecting mind, is so seldom presented to our thoughts when we are engaged in the necessary business of human life. This idea, I observed, is the result of two principles of our nature,—the one of which is, that every thing which begins to exist must have a cause;—the other, that a combination of means conspiring to a particular end implies intelligence. Now the former of these principles, although it plainly intimates to us (on an accurate analysis of the conceptions it suggests) the constant operation of *mind* in producing the phenomena of the universe, yet it does not call our attention to this efficiency of mind when we are employed about our ordinary occupations. On the contrary, the attention is diverted from such apprehensions by a very remarkable bias of our nature, which leads us to associate power and efficiency with material objects and physical events; and to consider the phenomena of the universe as a chain of causes and effects, the links of which are necessarily connected with each other.[1] Another important purpose is answered by this bias of the mind, as it serves to animate our curiosity in the investigation of physical causes, particularly in the earlier part of our existence. The curiosity which children discover is, I think, *chiefly* a confused desire to know the efficient causes of the phenomena they see; and although their curiosity in this respect is never gratified, yet it serves to increase their stock of useful knowledge, by directing their attention to *physical* causes, and to the general laws of nature.

In order to prevent still farther that inconvenient distraction of our thoughts which would necessarily result from the constant apprehension of the agency of mind, the changes in the state of the universe are in general accomplished by slow and imperceptible degrees. If an animal or a vegetable were brought into existence before our eyes in an instant of time,

[1] See upon this subject *Philosophy of the Human Mind*, Vol. I. chap. i. § 2.

the event would not in itself be more wonderful than their gradual growth from an embryo or seed to maturity. But, on the former supposition, there is no man who would not perceive and acknowledge the immediate agency of an intelligent cause; whereas, according to the actual order of things, the effect steals so slowly on our observation that it excites little or no curiosity, excepting in those who are possessed of a sufficient degree of reflection to contrast the present state of the objects they see with the first origin and progressive stages of their existence.

With respect to the other principle, which leads us to apprehend *intelligence* and *design* whenever we see a combination of means conspiring to a particular end, the effects of familiarity formerly remarked produce such habits of inattention in the greater part of mankind as prevent it from making any sensible impression on their minds on the ordinary occasions of human life. Were it not for these effects of familiarity the business of the world would appear unworthy of our regard, and we should be every moment in the same state of astonishment and of awe, as if (according to the supposition of Aristotle and of Cicero, already mentioned [p. 62]) we were suddenly introduced to a view of the magnificent spectacle of the earth and the heavens after having passed the earlier part of our lives in a cavern under ground.

In general, it would appear to have been the intention of the Deity to make known his existence and attributes to every mind that makes a proper use of its faculties, without obtruding these sublime conceptions on the thoughtless and inconsiderate, or withdrawing the attention even of the serious from the necessary pursuits of business. The consequence is, that the Deity is never an immediate object of human perception, but is recognised by the deliberate exercise of our reason in the incessant workings of his wisdom and power, as our feeble sight, unable to gaze directly at the splendour of the sun, enjoys the milder influence of his rays when reflected from the verdure of the woods or the flowers of the field.

Beside these circumstances in the constitution of the human

mind which conceal the Deity from the view of those whose thoughts are wholly engrossed by sensible objects, and by the pursuits of this world, there are some particular habits of life that are in a peculiar degree unfavourable to religious impressions; above all, those artificial habits to which we are accustomed in large and populous cities, where we are surrounded wholly with the effects of human skill and human industry. These lay hold of the curiosity in our early years, and divert it from the beautiful and sublime spectacle of the universe. Of such modes of thinking and feeling *atheism*, (or what amounts nearly to the same thing,) a total insensibility to all religious and moral impressions, is the genuine offspring; and in proportion as the manners of a people recede from the simplicity of natural occupations and pursuits, and acquire the superinduced habits either of commercial drudgery or of fashionable life, this miserable perversion of the understanding and the heart may be expected to prevail.[1] The scepticism which has long vitiated the philosophy, and injured the morals of a neighbouring country, may be traced in some degree at least from this very cause. The *Abbé de Lille* complains in his preface to the translation of the *Georgics* of the difficulty of the work, from those ideas of meanness and poverty which the French are accustomed to associate with the profession of husbandry; —and the same thing has been experienced by those who have attempted to translate the *Seasons of Thomson* into that language. How perverted from all the purposes of our being must have been a state of manners, in which those rural scenes

[1] There is, I think, some ingenuity as well as wit in the following note, by an Italian translator of Horace, on the Epicurean principles sported by the city Mouse, in his conversation with his country friend.

" . . . . . Quid te juvat, inquit, amice,
Prærupti nemoris patientem vivere dorso?
Vis tu homines urbemque feris præponere silvis?
Carpe viam, (mihi crede,) comes: terrestria quando
Mortales animas vivunt sortita, neque ulla est
Aut magno aut parvo lethi fuga: quo, bone, circa,
Dum licet, in rebus jucundis vive beatus;
Vive memor, quam sis ævi brevis."—
[*Sermones*, L. II. Sat. vi. 90.]

" Jucundum quidem est urbanum audire murem Epicuri de animi interitu propugnare sententiam. Ergone tanta erit urbium pravitas, ut mures etiam atheismum urbe profiteantur?"—Horace's *Satires and Art of Poetry*, translated into Italian verse, with notes. Milan, 1784.

and occupations, which to our English poets form the most favourite subjects of description, were considered as incompatible with the elegance and dignity of poetical expression; and where ideas of meanness and wretchedness were associated with the primitive and the only *essential* occupation of man; that occupation in which alone he associates his exertions with the bounty of Providence, who (as Franklin has beautifully observed) "blesses the labours of the husbandman by a continued miracle wrought in his favour, as a reward for his innocent life and virtuous industry."

SECT. IV.—DIGRESSION WITH RESPECT TO THE USE AND ABUSE OF THE SPECULATION CONCERNING FINAL CAUSES IN PHILOSOPHICAL INQUIRIES.*

The objections against the speculation concerning Final Causes which have been hitherto under our consideration, have been urged with the avowed design of invalidating the argument *a posteriori* for the existence of God. Another objection, however, still remains to be examined, which, although it has been frequently insisted on by authors who were far from wishing to favour the cause of atheism, it is of importance for us to obviate as completely as possible, before bringing the present argument to a conclusion, on account of its tendency to weaken that species of evidence on the subject which is most level to the apprehension of ordinary men. The objection I allude to is founded on the supposed incompetency of the human faculties to penetrate the designs of Providence, and on the consequent impiety and presumption of indulging ourselves in conjectures concerning the operations of infinite wisdom. Descartes has insisted much on this idea, and has carried it so far as to reject altogether such speculations from philosophy. "Let us never found any of our reasonings concerning physical phenomena on *the ends* which we may imagine God or nature had in view in the constitution of the universe;

* [See the section of the *Elements* above referred to, p. 35.]

for this obvious reason, that we ought not to indulge so great a degree of arrogance as to suppose ourselves privy to the divine counsels; but, considering God as the *efficient cause* of all things, we shall see whatever conclusions the light of reason [lumen naturale] enables us to form from that knowledge of his attributes which he has been pleased to enable us to attain."[1] —"And for this reason alone I am of opinion that the whole of this speculation concerning *Final Causes* is altogether useless, because I do not think that, without rashness, we can presume to investigate the designs of God."[2] Some observations, much to the same purpose, are to be found in the works of Maupertuis and of Buffon.

To this class of observations against Final Causes, a most satisfactory answer is given by Mr. Boyle in an Essay written expressly on the subject. The great merits of this excellent person as an experimental philosopher are universally known; but I do not think that his general philosophical views have attracted so much notice from his successors as they ought to have done. They appear to me to be uncommonly comprehensive and just, and to bear marks of a mind no less fitted for metaphysical and moral pursuits than for physical researches. In the work to which I refer at present, we find a pleasing union of philosophical depth with that exalted piety which formed a distinguished feature in the author's character. The world he considered (as he tells us himself) "as the temple of God, and man as born the *priest of nature*, ordained (by being qualified) to celebrate Divine Service, not only *in* it, but *for* it." With these views he could not fail to be irritated at the attempts made by Descartes to explode his favourite speculation concerning final causes; and the remarks he has made in reply to him contain a complete refutation of all that has been since advanced with a like view by Maupertuis and Buffon. His reasonings on this subject extend to so great a length, that it is impossible to quote them here in the author's own language; and I am unwilling to weaken their force by an imperfect abstract. I must therefore content myself with extracting

[1] *Principia*, Pars I. § xxviii. [2] *Meditatio Quarta*, [*sub initio.*]

one of his remarks, from which the principal scope of his Essay may be easily collected.

"Suppose that a countryman, being in a clear day brought into the garden of some famous mathematician, should see there one of those curious gnomonic instruments that show at once the place of the sun in the zodiac, his declination from the equator, the day of the month, the length of the day, &c., &c., it would indeed be presumption in him, being unacquainted both with the mathematical disciplines, and the several intentions of the artist, to pretend or think himself able to discover *all the ends* for which so curious and elaborate a piece was framed; but when he sees it furnished with a style, with horary lines and numbers, and manifestly perceives the shadow to mark from time to time the hour of the day, it would be no more a presumption than an error in him to conclude, that (whatever other uses the instrument was fit or was designed for) it is a sun-dial, that was meant to show the hour of the day."[1]

The Essay of Mr. Boyle now referred to, appears to me to be sufficient to vindicate the investigation of Final Causes so far as it is subservient to the proof of a Deity. At the same time, I am ready to acknowledge, that it is a speculation extremely liable to be abused, and which should always be conducted with modesty and diffidence. I acknowledge, also, that it has sometimes been introduced into natural philosophy in a manner which has led physical inquirers astray from the proper objects of their science. The Peripatetics, in particular, have been justly accused of blending Final and Physical Causes together, and substituting conjectures concerning the ends which nature had in view for an explanation of her operations. I make this observation at present, as it furnishes me with an opportunity of vindicating Lord Bacon from the charge of a tendency to atheism, which was first brought against him by Cudworth, and has been repeated by some modern sceptics, who wished to

[1] [*Essay on Final Causes.*]—In the same Essay Mr. Boyle has offered some very acute and judicious strictures on the abuses to which this research is liable, when incautiously and presumptuously pursued.

justify their own aversion to the speculation about Final Causes by Bacon's authority.

The passage to which Cudworth objects is as follows:—"Incredibile est quantum agmen idolorum philosophiæ immiserit, naturalium operationum ad similitudinem actionum humanarum reductio."[1] "If," says Cudworth, "the Advancer of Learning here speaks of those who unskilfully attribute their own properties to inanimate bodies," (as when they say that matter desires forms as the female does the male, and that heavy bodies descend down by appetite towards the centre, that they may rest therein,) "there is nothing to be reprehended in the passage. But if his meaning be extended further to take away all final causes from the things of nature, as if nothing were done therein for ends intended by a higher mind, then it is the very spirit of atheism and infidelity. It is no *idol* of the *cave* or *den*, (to use that affected language,) that is, no prejudice or fallacy imposed upon ourselves, from the attributing our own animalish properties to things without us, to think that the frame and system of this whole world was contrived by a perfect understanding, being, or mind."[2]

In this passage the very learned author seems to have lost sight of his usual candour; and, indeed, I think it impossible that such expressions could have escaped him, if he had had the patience to peruse the whole of Bacon's writings, for there is no author, ancient or modern, who lies less open to any charge of scepticism. "I had rather believe," says he in one of his *Essays*, "all the fables in the Legend, and the Talmud, and the Alcoran, than that this universal frame is without a Mind. It is true that a little philosophy inclineth man's mind to atheism; but depth in philosophy bringeth men's minds about to religion; for while the mind of man looketh upon second causes scattered, it may sometimes rest in them and go no farther;

[1] "It is incredible what a host of prejudices have been introduced into philosophy by a disposition to liken natural operations to the actions of men."—[*De Augm. Sc.* L. V. c. iv.—See *Org.* I. xlviii.]

[2] Page 680, first edition, [and Birch's. Book I. chap. v. The words of Cudworth, though his meaning is preserved, are not, however, here always punctiliously transcribed.]

but when it beholdeth the chain of them confederate and linked together, it must needs fly to Providence and to Deity. Nay, even that school which is most accused of atheism, doth most demonstrate religion, that is, the school of Leucippus, and Democritus, and Epicurus. For it is a thousand times more credible that four mutable elements, and one immutable fifth essence, duly and eternally placed, need no God, than that an army of infinite small portions, or seeds unplaced, should have produced this order and beauty without a Divine Marshal."*

The real state of Bacon's opinion about Final Causes was plainly this: That the consideration of them was not properly a part of natural philosophy, but of metaphysics, or of natural theology; and that it was safer (at least for our physical inquiries) that they should be kept as distinct as possible from all other sciences; a caution which, although not so necessary in the present age, was highly useful in his time, in consequence of the absurd mixture of physical and final causes which occurs in the writings of the Peripatetics, who then possessed an almost unlimited influence over the opinions of the learned. That he did not mean to censure the speculation about Final Causes, when confined to its proper place and applied to its proper purpose, appears from the following passage:—

"The second part of *Metaphysics* is the investigation of *Final Causes*, which I object to, *not* as a speculation which ought to be omitted, but as one which is generally introduced out of its proper place, by being connected with *physical* researches. If this were merely a fault of arrangement, I should not be disposed to lay great stress upon it; for arrangement is useful chiefly as a help to illustrate, and does not form an essential object in science. But in this instance a disregard to *method* has occasioned the most fatal consequences to philosophy, inasmuch as the consideration of *final* causes in physics has supplanted and banished the study of *physical* causes, the fancy amusing itself with unsubstantial explanations derived from the former, and diverting the curiosity from a steady prosecution of

* [*Essay* xvi. *Of Atheism.*]

the latter."* After illustrating this remark by various examples, Lord Bacon adds,—"I would not, however, be understood by these observations to insinuate, that the final causes just mentioned may not be founded on truth, and in a *metaphysical* view extremely worthy of attention; but only, that when such disquisitions invade and overrun the appropriate province of *physics*, they are likely to lay waste and ruin that department of philosophy." The whole passage concludes with these words: "And so much concerning *metaphysics;* the part of which relating to *final causes* I do not deny may be met with as a subject of discussion, both in physical and in metaphysical treatises. But while, in the latter of these, it is introduced with propriety, in the former it is altogether misplaced; and *that* not merely because it violates the rules of a just order, but because it operates as a powerful obstacle to the progress of inductive science."†

This passage, while it refutes in the most satisfactory manner the charge brought against Bacon by Cudworth, contains some very just remarks on the improper application made by the Peripatetics and their followers, of the speculation concerning final causes,—an abuse which they carried so far as to justify Bacon, in a work expressly destined to illustrate the true method of inquiry in physics, to propose the complete rejection of that speculation from natural philosophy.

In the present age, when the true method of philosophizing is pretty generally understood, and when philosophers seem more in danger of going wrong in natural theology than in natural philosophy, it does not appear to me to be so necessary as formerly to banish final causes from physics, provided always they are kept distinct from physical causes, with which they are scarcely in any danger (in the present state of science) of being confounded. What harm can possibly result from the natural philosopher's remarking those instances of design which fall under his review in the course of his inquiries? Or if it should be considered as foreign to *his* province to speak of *design*, he may at least be permitted to remark what *ends* are

* [*De Augmentis Scientiarum*, Lib. III. cap. iv., translated.] † [Ibid.]

really accomplished by particular means, and what advantages are derived by man from the general laws by which the phenomena of nature are regulated. In doing this, he only states a *fact;* and if it be improper for him to go farther, he may leave the inference to the moralist or to the divine.

In consequence, however, of the vague and commonplace declamation against the use of final causes in physics, countenanced by those detached expressions of Bacon, which have suggested the foregoing reflections, it has become fashionable among philosophers to omit the consideration of them entirely, as a speculation inconsistent with the genuine spirit of inductive science; a caution (it may be remarked by the way) which is the most scrupulously observed by those writers who are the most forward to remark every apparent *anomaly* or *disorder* in the economy of the universe. The effect of this has been to divest the study of nature of its most attractive charms, and to sacrifice to a false idea of logical rigour all the moral impressions and pleasures which it is fitted to yield; and even, when the most striking accommodation of means to an end force themselves upon the mind, to take no notice of such facts in their physical speculations. Nay, what is worse, those writers who are the most forward to remark every apparent irregularity in the universe never fail to remind us (if at any time we seem to be struck with appearances of order and of wisdom) that the consideration of *final causes* is altogether exploded by that inductive philosophy which Bacon recommended, and to which we are indebted for the sublime discoveries of Newton and his followers. Indeed, this scholastic phrase has become so obnoxious, that it were to be wished it could be laid aside, and some simpler mode of speaking, such as *ends* or *uses*, substituted instead of it. In the meantime, it may contribute to smooth the way for such a change in phraseology, to employ indiscriminately these different terms as synonymous and convertible expressions.

To this we may add, that there are some parts of nature which we cannot be said to understand as philosophers, without the consideration of *uses*. This is remarkably the case in the

study of anatomy. To know the structure of the body of an animal we must not only examine the conformation of the parts, but we must consider their *functions*, and in what way they conspire to the preservation and health of the animal.[1] I am inclined to think that it is by means of the consideration of *uses* that the principal anatomical discoveries have been made. Every anatomist in his inquiries proceeds upon the maxim, That nothing in the body of an animal was made in vain; and when he meets with something, the use of which is not obvious, he feels himself dissatisfied till he discovers some at least of the purposes to which it is subservient. We have one remarkable instance of this recorded by Mr. Boyle.

"I remember that when I asked our famous Harvey, in the only discourse I had with him, (which was but a little while before he died,) what were the things which induced him to think of a circulation of the blood? He answered me, that when he took notice that the valves in the veins of so many parts of the body were so placed, that they gave free passage to the blood towards the heart, but opposed the passage of the venal blood the contrary way, he was invited to think that so provident a cause as nature had not placed so many valves without design, and no design seemed more probable than that since the blood could not well, because of the interposing valves, be sent by the veins to the limbs, it should be sent through the arteries, and return through the veins, whose valves did not oppose its course that way."[2]

In general it may be observed, that those philosophers who have been most successful in detecting the secrets of nature, have been men strongly impressed with the general idea of prevailing order and of benevolent design; and I have no doubt that this impression contributed greatly to enlighten their

[1] Consult on this subject a paper by Dr. John Wallis, and another by Dr. Tyson, in the *Philosophical Transactions*, No. 269. For a short account of them, see *Philosophical Transactions*, (from 1700 to 1720,) abridged, Vol. V. p. 1, *et seq.*

[2] [*Essay on Final Causes.*] Boyle's Works, Vol. IV., folio, p. 539. For some remarks on this anecdote by the late celebrated anatomist, Dr. William Hunter, see *Philosophy of the Human Mind*, Vol. II. pp. 487, 488, third edition. [*Supra, Works*, Vol. III. p. 341, *seq.*]

views and to guide their investigations. It is remarked by Dr. Priestley, (a writer whose opinion on *this* question is of great value, from the signal success of his own experimental inquiries,) "that, as true philosophy tends to promote piety, so a generous and manly piety is reciprocally subservient to the purposes of philosophy; for while we keep in view the great FINAL Cause of all the parts and the laws of nature, we have a clue by which to trace the efficient cause." To the same purpose Priestley quotes the following remark of Hartley in his *Observations on Man*:—"Since this world is a system of benevolence, and consequently its Author the object of unbounded love and adoration, benevolence and piety are our only true guides in our inquiries into it, the only keys which will unlock the mysteries of nature, and clues which lead through her labyrinths. Of this all branches of natural philosophy and natural history afford abundant instances. In all these inquiries let the inquirer take it for granted previously that every thing is right, and the best that can be, *cæteris manentibus;* that is, let him with a pious confidence seek for benevolent purposes, and he will be always directed to the right road, and after a due continuance in it attain to some new and valuable truth: whereas every other principle of examination being foreign to the great plan on which the universe is constructed, must lead into endless mazes, errors, and perplexities."[1]

Having said so much about the research of Final Causes in Physics, I shall subjoin a few reflections on its application to the Philosophy of the Human Mind; a science in which the just rules of investigation are as yet far from being completely understood. Of this no stronger proof can be produced than the confusion between Final and Efficient causes which still prevails in the writings of our most eminent moralists. The same confusion, as I have already observed, may be traced in the *physical* Theories of the schoolmen; but since the time of Bacon it has been so completely corrected, that, in the wildest hypo-

[1] Preface to Priestley's *History of Electricity*.

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theses of the eighteenth century, hardly a vestige of it is to be found.

To the logical error just mentioned it is owing that so many false accounts have been given of the principles of human conduct, or of the motives from which our actions proceed. When the general laws of our constitution are attentively examined, they will be found to have for their object the happiness and improvement both of the individual and of society. This is their *final* cause, or the end for which we may presume they were destined by our Maker. But in such cases it seldom happens, that, while man is obeying the active impulses of his nature, he has any idea of the ultimate ends he is promoting, or is able to calculate the remote effects of those little wheels which he puts into motion. These active impulses may therefore in one sense be considered as the *efficient* causes of his conduct; inasmuch as they are the means employed to determine him to a particular course of action, and as they operate, at least in the first instance, without any reflection on *his* part on the ends to which they are subservient. Philosophers, however, have in every age been extremely apt, when they had discovered the salutary tendency of any principle of action, to conclude that the principle derived its origin from a sense of this tendency. Hence have arisen the theories which attempt to account for all our actions from Self-love, and also those which would resolve the whole of morality into views of Utility.

I do not know of any author who has been more completely aware of this common error than Mr. Smith, who, in his *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, always treats separately of the *final* causes of the different principles he considers, and of the *mechanism* (as he calls it) by which nature accomplishes the effect. The following profound remarks show sufficiently the opinion he had of the great importance of attending to the distinction between them.

"In every part of the universe we observe means adjusted with the nicest artifice to the ends which they are intended to produce, and in the mechanism of a plant or animal body admire how everything is contrived for advancing the two

great purposes of nature, the support of the individual, and the propagation of the species. But in these, and in all such objects, we still distinguish the efficient from the final cause of their several motions and organizations. The digestion of the food, the circulation of the blood, and the secretion of the several juices which are drawn from it, are operations all of them necessary for the great purposes of animal life, yet we never endeavour to account for them from those purposes, as from their efficient causes; nor imagine that the blood circulates, or that the food digests of its own accord, with a view or intention to the purposes of circulation or digestion. The wheels of the watch are all admirably adapted to the end for which it was made, the pointing of the hour. All their various motions conspire in the nicest manner to produce this effect. If they were endowed with a desire and intention to produce it, they could not do better. Yet we never ascribe any such intention or desire to them, but to the watchmaker; and we know that they are put into motion by a spring, which intends the effect it produces as little as they do. But though, in accounting for the operations of bodies, we never fail to distinguish in this manner the Efficient from the Final Cause, in accounting for those of the mind we are apt to confound these two different things with one another. When by natural principles we are led to advance those ends which a refined and enlightened reason would recommend to us, we are very apt to impute to that reason, as to their efficient cause, the sentiments and actions by which we advance those ends, and to imagine that to be the wisdom of man which in reality is the wisdom of God. Upon a superficial view this cause seems sufficient, and the system of human nature seems to be more simple and agreeable when all its different operations are in this manner deduced from a single principle."[1]

These observations point out very plainly the errors to which we are exposed in moral inquiries, by our disposition to confound together efficient and final causes. But it does not therefore follow, that even in such inquiries the consideration of final

[1] Vol. I. p. 218, [Part II. sect. ii. chap. 3.]

causes is to be rejected. On the contrary, this very author (as I already hinted) has frequently indulged himself in speculations concerning them, and seems plainly to have considered them as important objects of philosophical research, no less than *efficient* (or, as I would rather call them, *physical*) causes. The only caution to be observed is, that the one may not be confounded with the other.

Between these two different researches, however, there is a very intimate connexion. In many cases the consideration of final causes has led to the discovery of some general law of nature, (as in the instance of the circulation of the blood, already mentioned,) and in almost every case the discovery of a general law points out to us clearly some wise and beneficent purposes to which it is subservient. And it is the prospect of such applications that chiefly renders the investigation of general laws interesting to the mind.

Among the philosophers of antiquity, no one seems to have entertained juster notions on this subject than Socrates! "After many other fruitless attempts he had made in his youth to see into the causes of things, happening to hear that Anaxagoras taught that all things were governed by a supreme mind, and being mightily pleased with this principle, he had recourse to his writings, full of expectation to see the whole scheme of nature explained from the perfect wisdom of an all-governing mind, and to have all his doubts about the perfection of the universe satisfied. But he was much disappointed when he found that Anaxagoras made no use of this sovereign mind in his explications of nature, and referred nothing to the order and perfection of the universe as its reason, but introduced certain aerial, ethereal, and aqueous powers, and such incredible principles for the causes of things. Upon the whole, Socrates found that this account of nature was no more satisfactory than if one, who undertook to account for the actions of Socrates, should begin with telling us that Socrates was actuated by a principle of thought and design; and pretending to explain how he came to be sitting in prison at that time when he was condemned to die by the unjust and ungrateful Athenians, he should acquaint

us that the body of Socrates consisted of bones and muscles; that the bones were solid, and had their articulations, while the muscles were capable of being contracted and extended, by which he was enabled to move his body, and put himself in a sitting posture; and after adding an explanation of the nature of sound, and of the organs of the voice, he should boast at length that he had thus accounted for Socrates's sitting and conversing with his friends in prison, without taking notice of the decree of the Athenians, and that he himself thought it was more just and becoming to wait patiently for the execution of their sentence, than escape to Megara or Thebes, there to live in exile. 'Tis true," says he, "that without bones and nerves I should not be able to perform any action in life; but it would be an unaccountable way of speaking to assign those for the reasons of my actions, while my mind is influenced by the appearance of what is best."[1]

The authority of Socrates, however, cannot be expected to have much weight with natural philosophers in the present age of the world. That of Sir Isaac Newton will not be disputed on a question relating to the spirit of that inductive philosophy, of which his writings afford the most perfect and most successful exemplification hitherto given to the world. This great man (as we are told by his intimate friend Mr. Maclaurin) used sometimes to observe, "that it gave him particular pleasure to see how much his philosophy had contributed to promote an attention to Final Causes, after Descartes and others had attempted to banish them." Mr. Maclaurin, too, (whose acquaintance with the just rules of philosophizing will not be denied,) has remarked, "that of all sorts of causes, Final Causes are the most clearly placed in our view; and that it is difficult to comprehend why it should be thought arrogant in us to attend to the design and contrivance that is so evidently displayed in nature, and obvious to all men; to maintain, for instance, that the eye was made for seeing, though we may not be able either to

[1] See Maclaurin's *Account of Newton's Philosophical Discoveries*, [Book I. chap. ii. § 2.]—The above is a short abridgment of the reasonings of Socrates in the *Phædon* of Plato.

account mechanically for the refraction of light in the coats of the eye, or to explain how the image is propagated from the retina to the mind."*

It was before observed, with respect to anatomists, that all of them, without exception, whether professedly friendly or hostile to the inquisition of Final Causes, concur in availing themselves of its guidance in their physiological researches. A similar remark will be found to apply to other classes of scientific inquirers. Whatever their speculative opinions may be, the moment their curiosity is fairly engaged in the pursuit of truth, either physical or moral, they involuntarily, and often perhaps unconsciously, submit their understandings to a logic borrowed neither from the schools of Aristotle nor of Bacon. The ethical system of those ancient philosophers who held that *virtue consists in following nature*, not only involves a recognition of the doctrine of Final Causes, but represents the study of them, in as far as regards the ends and destination of our own being, as the great business and duty of life:

"Quid sumus, et quidnam victuri gignimur."†

The system, too, of those physicians who profess to follow nature in the treatment of diseases, by watching and aiding her *medicative powers*, assumes the truth of the same doctrine as its fundamental principle.—A still more remarkable illustration, however, of the influence which this species of evidence has over the mind, even when we are the least aware of its connexion with metaphysical conclusions, occurs in the speculations of the French Economists. The very title of *Physiocratie*, by which some of them distinguished their system, affords a sufficient proof of their own ideas concerning its characteristical spirit and tendency; and the same thing is more fully demonstrated by their frequent recurrence to the physical and moral laws of nature, as the unerring standard which the legislator should keep in view in all his positive institutions. "Ces lois," says Quesnai, "forment ensemble ce qu'on appelle *la loi naturelle*. Tous les hommes et toutes les puissances humaines

* [Ibid.]

† [*Persius*, Sat. iii. 67.]

doivent être soumis à ces lois souveraines, instituées par l'Etre Suprème: Elles sont immuables et irréfragables, et les meilleures lois possibles; et par conséquent la base du gouvernement le plus parfait, et la règle fondamentale de toutes les lois positives; car les lois positives ne sont que des lois de manutention relatives à l'ordre naturel évidemment le plus avantageux au genre humain." I do not speak at present of the *justness* of those opinions; I wish only to remark, that, in the statement of them given by their original authors, it is assumed as a truth self-evident and indisputable, not merely that benevolent design is manifested in all the physical and moral arrangements connected with this globe, but that the study of these arrangements is indispensably necessary to lay a solid foundation for political science.

The same principles appear to have led Mr. Smith into that train of thinking which gave birth to his inquiries concerning National Wealth. "Man," he observes in one of his oldest manuscripts now extant, "is generally considered by statesmen and projectors as the materials of a sort of political mechanics. Projectors disturb nature in the course of her operations in human affairs; and it requires no more than to let her alone, and give her fair play in the pursuit of her own designs." And in another passage: "Little else is requisite to carry a state to the highest degree of opulence from the lowest barbarism but peace, easy taxes, and a tolerable administration of justice; all the rest being brought about by the natural course of things. All governments which thwart this natural course, which force things into another channel, or which endeavour to arrest the progress of society at a particular point, are unnatural, and to support themselves are obliged to be oppressive and tyrannical." Various other passages of a similar import might be quoted both from his *Wealth of Nations* and from his *Theory of Moral Sentiments.*

This doctrine of Mr. Smith's and of Quesnay's, which tends to simplify the theory of legislation by exploding the policy of those complicated checks and restraints which swell the municipal codes of most nations, has now, I believe, become the

prevailing creed of thinking men all over Europe; and, as commonly happens with prevailing creeds, has been pushed by many of its partisans far beyond the views and intentions of its original authors. Such, too, is the influence of fashion on the one hand, and of obnoxious phrases on the other, that it has found some of its most zealous abettors and propagators among writers who would reject, without a moment's hesitation, as superstitious and puerile, every reference to *final causes* in a philosophical discussion.[1]

APPENDIX.*

[*On the Calculus of Probabilities, in reference to the preceding Argument for the Existence of God, from Final Causes.*]

AMONG the later philosophers on the continent, the advocates for Atheism seem to me to lay the chief stress on the old Epicurean argument, as stated by Lucretius. The sceptical suggestions on the same subject which occur in Mr. Hume's *Essay on the Idea of Necessary Connexion*, and which have given occasion to so much discussion in this country, do not seem to have ever produced any considerable impression on the French philosophers. Very few of the number, I am inclined to think, have thoroughly comprehended their import and tendency.[1]

[1] See *Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind*, Vol. II. Chap. iv. sect. 6.—[*Works*, Vol. III. p. 335, *seq.*; and ensuing *Appendix*.]

* [In the former edition this was entitled APPENDIX II.; and stood at the end of the second volume. It might, indeed, perhaps with propriety, have been converted into an excursive Note, more especially as the materials of which it is composed are in great part found in Note EEE of the *Dissertation*, (above, *Works*, Vol. I. pp. 608-613.) I have, however, thought it better to insert it here, in the order of its connections. It, in fact, originates an excursive note itself.—*Ed.*]

[1] According to Degerando, (*Histoire Comparée*, Tom. II. pp. 151, 152,) Mendelsohn was the first who thought of opposing Hume's Scepticism about Cause and Effect, by considerations drawn from the Calculus of Probabilities. This statement is confirmed by Lacroix, who refers for further information to Mendelsohn's *Treatise on Evidence*, which obtained the prize from the Academy of Berlin in 1763. Degerando himself, in his *Traité des Signes et de l'Art de Penser*, (published

"Nam certè neque consilio primordia rerum
Ordine se quæque, atque sagaci mente locârunt;
Nec quos quæque darent motus pepigere profectò:
Sed quia multimodis, multis, mutata, per omne
Ex infinito vexantur percita plagis,
Omne genus motûs, et cœtûs experiundo,
Tandem deveniunt in taleis disposituras,
Quàlibus hæc rebus consistit summa creata."[1]

And still more explicitly in the following lines:

"Nam cum respicias immensi temporis omne
Præteritum spatium; tum motus materiaï
Multimodi quam sint; facile hoc accredere possis,
Semina sæpe in eodem, ut nunc sunt, ordine posta."[2]

To this argument Diderot repeatedly refers in his voluminous writings; and even sometimes steps out of his way to introduce it; a remarkable instance of which occurs in his *Traité du Beau*, and also in the article *Beau* in the *Encyclopédie*.

"Le Beau n'est pas toujours l'ouvrage d'une cause intelligente; le mouvement établit souvent, soit dans un être considéré solitairement, soit entre plusieurs êtres comparés entr'eux, une multitude prodigieuse de rapports surprenans. Les cabinets d'histoire naturelle en offrent un grand nombre d'exemples. Les rapports sont alors des résultats de combinaisons fortuites, du moins par rapport à nous. La nature imite en se jouant, dans cent occasions, les productions d'art; et l'on pourroit demander, je ne dis pas si ce philosophe qui fut jeté par une tempête sur les bords d'une ile inconnue, avoit raison de se crier, à la vue de quelques figures de géométrie; *Courage mes Amis, voici des pas d'hommes;* mais combien il faudroit marquer de rapports dans un être, pour avoir une certitude complète qu'il est l'ouvrage d'un artiste[3] (en quelle occasion, un

l'an viii.) has adopted the same view of the subject, without being then aware (as he assures us himself) that he had been anticipated in this speculation by Mendelsohn.—(Ibid. p. 155.) Lacroix remarks the coincidence of opinion of these different authors, with some hints suggested by Helvetius, in a note on the first chapter of the first discourse, in his work entitled *l'Esprit.—Traité Elémentaire du Calcul des Probabilités.*

[1] Lucret. i. 1020.

[2] Lucret. iii. 867.

[3] Is not this precisely the sophistical mode of questioning known among logi-

seul défaut de symmétrie prouveroit plus que toute somme donnée de rapports); comment sont entr'eux le temps de l'action de la cause fortuite, et les rapports observés dans les effets produits; et si (à l'exception des œuvres du Tout-Puissant) il y a des cas où le nombre des rapports ne puisse jamais être compensé par celui des jets." This passage forms the conclusion of the article *Beau* in the French *Encyclopédie*, and, notwithstanding the parenthetical *salvo* in the last clause, the drift of the argument is sufficiently obvious.

In one of the articles, however, of his *Pensées Philosophiques*, Diderot has explained his meaning on this subject much more fully.

"J'ouvre les cahiers d'un philosophe célèbre, et je lis: 'Athées je vous accorde que le mouvement est essentiel à la matière; qu'en concluez-vous? que le monde résulte du jet fortuit des atomes? j'aimerois autant que vous me disiez que l'Iliade d'Homère ou la Henriade de Voltaire est un résultat de jets fortuits de caractères?'"—"Je me garderai bien de faire ce raisonnement à un Athée. Cette comparaison lui donneroit beau jeu. Selon les lois de l'analyse des sorts, me diroit-il, je ne dois point être surpris qu'une chose arrive, lorsqu'elle est possible, et que la difficulté de l'évènement est compensée par la quantité des jets. Il'y a tel nombre de coups dans lesquels je gagerois avec avantage d'amener cent mille six à-là-fois avec cent mille dez. Quelle que fût la somme finie de caractères avec laquelle on me proposeroit d'engendrer fortuitement l'Iliade, il y a telle somme finie de jets qui me rendroit la proposition avantageuse; mon avantage seroit même infini, si la quantité de jets accordée étoit infinie."[1]

cians by the name of *Sorites* or *Acervus?* "Vitiosum sane," says Cicero, "et captiosum genus."—*Acad. Quæst.* Lib. iv. xvi.

[1] *Pensées Philosophiques*, xxi. See first volume of his work, Naigeon's edition. With respect to the passages here extracted from Diderot, it is worthy of observation, that, if the atheistical argument from chances be conclusive in its application to that order of things which we behold, it is not less conclusive when applied to every other possible combination of atoms which imagination can conceive; and affords a mathematical proof, that the fables of Grecian mythology, the tales of the Genii, and the dreams of the Rosicrucians, *may*, or rather *must*, all of them be somewhere

The very same reasoning, in substance, has been since brought forward by different French mathematicians; among others by the justly celebrated Laplace, in his *Philosophical Essay on Probabilities.* I shall quote at length one of his most remarkable reasonings.

"Au milieu des causes variables et inconnues que nous comprenons sous le nom de *hazard,* et qui rendent incertaine et irrégulière, la marche des évènemens; on voit naître à mesure qu'ils se multiplient, une régularité frappante qui semble tenir à un dessein, et que l'on a considérée comme une preuve de la Providence qui gouverne le monde. Mais en y réfléchissant, on reconnoît bientôt que cette régularité n'est que le développement des possibilités respectives des évènemens simples qui doivent se présenter plus souvent lorsqu'ils sont plus probables. Concevons, par exemple, une urne qui renferme des boules blanches et des boules noires; et supposons qu'à chaque fois que l'on en tire une boule, on la remette dans l'urne pour procéder à un nouveau tirage. Le rapport du nombre des boules blanches extraites, au nombre des boules noires extraites, sera le plus souvent très-irrégulier dans les premiers tirages; mais les causes variables de cette irrégularité, produisent des effets alternativement favorables et contraires à la marche régulière des évènemens, et qui se détruisent mutuellement dans l'ensemble d'un grand nombre de tirages, laissent de plus en plus appercevoir le rapport des boules blanches aux boules noires contenues dans l'urne, ou les possibilités respectives d'en extraire une boule blanche ou une boule noire à chaque tirage. De là résulte le théorême suivant.

"La probabilité que la rapport du nombre des boules blanches extraites, au nombre total des boules sorties, ne s'écarte pas au delà d'un intervalle donné, du rapport du nombre des boules

realized in the infinite extent of the universe; a proposition which, if true, would destroy every argument for or against any given system of opinions founded on the reasonableness or the unreasonableness of the tenets involved in it; and would of consequence lead to the subversion of the whole frame of the human understanding.

I have pursued this argument farther in the *Dissertation prefixed to the Encyclopædia Britannica,* Part ii. pp. 241-243.—[*Supra, Works,* Vol. I. pp. 585-589. Note TT.]

blanches, au nombre total des boules contenues dans l'urne, approche indéfiniment de la certitude, par la multiplication indéfinie des évènemens, quelque petit que l'on suppose cet intervalle. . . . .

On peut tirer du théorême précédent, cette conséquence qui doit être regardée comme une loi générale, savoir, que les rapports des effets de la nature, sont à fort peu près constans, quand ces effets sont considérés en grand nombre. Ainsi malgré la variété des années, la somme des productions pendant un nombre d'années, considérable, est sensiblement la même ; en sorte que l'homme, par une utile prévoyance, peut se mettre à l'abri de l'irrégularité des saisons, en répandant également sur tous les temps, les biens que la nature distribue d'une manière inégale. Je n'excepte pas de la loi précédente, les effets dus aux causes morales. Le rapport des naissances annuelles à la population, et celui des mariages aux naissances, n'éprouvent que de très-petites variations : à Paris, le nombre des naissances annuelles a toujours été le même à peu près ; et j'ai ouï dire qu'à la poste, dans les temps ordinaires, le nombre des lettres mises au rebut par les défauts des adresses, change peu, chaque année ; ce qui a été pareillement observé à Londres.

" Il suit encore de ce théorême, que dans une série d'évènemens, indéfiniment prolongée, l'action des causes régulières et constantes doit l'emporter à la longue, sur celle des causes irrégulières. . . . .

" Si l'on applique ce théorême au rapport des naissances des garçons à celles des filles, observé dans les diverses parties de l'Europe ; on trouve que ce rapport, partout à peu près égal à celui de 22 à 21, indique avec une extrême probabilité, une plus grande facilité dans les naissances des garçons. En considérant ensuite qu'il est la même à Naples qu'à Pétersbourg, on verra qu'à cet égard, l'influence du climat est insensible. On pouvoit donc soupçonner contre l'opinion commune, que cette supériorité des naissances masculines subsiste dans l'orient même. J'avais en conséquence invité les savans Français envoyés en Egypte, à s'occuper de cette question intéressante ; mais la difficulté d'obtenir des renseignemens précis sur les naissances ne leur a

pas permis de la résoudre. Heureusement, Humboldt n'a point négligé cet objet dans l'immensité des choses nouvelles qu'il a observées et recueillies en Amérique, avec tant de sagacité, de constance, et de courage. Il a retrouvé entre les tropiques le même rapport des naissances des garçons à celles des filles, que l'on observe à Paris ; ce qui doit faire regarder la supériorité des naissances masculines, comme une loi générale de l'espèce humaine. Les lois que suivent à cet égard, les divers espèces d'animaux, me paraissent dignes de l'attention des naturalistes."[1]

From these quotations, it appears that the constancy in the proportion of births to the whole population of a country, in that of births to marriages, and in that of male children to females, are considered by Laplace as facts of the same kind, and to be accounted for in the same way with the very narrow limits within which the number of misdirected letters in the General Post-Office of Paris varies from year to year. The same thing, he tells us, has been observed in the Dead-Letter Office at London. But as he mentions both these last facts merely on the authority of a *hearsay*, I do not know to what degree of credit they are entitled, and I shall therefore leave them entirely out of our consideration in the present argument. The meaning which Laplace wished to convey by this comparison cannot be mistaken.

Among the different facts in political arithmetic here alluded to by Laplace, that of the constancy in the proportion of male to female births, (which he himself pronounces to be a *general law of our species*,) is the most exactly analogous to the example of the urn containing a mixture of white and of black balls, from which he deduces his general theorem. I shall accordingly select this in preference to the others. The intelligent reader will at once perceive that the same reasoning is equally applicable to all of them.

Let us suppose, then, that the white balls in Laplace's urn

[1] *Essai Philosophique sur les Probabilités*, par M. le Comte Laplace. 3me edit. pp. 73-76; [2de edit. pp. 93-99; but the passage has been partially modified.]—See Note C.

represent male infants, and the black balls female infants, upon which supposition, the longer that the operation (described by Laplace) of drawing and returning the balls is continued, the nearer will the proportion of white to black balls approach to that of 22 to 21. What inference (according to Laplace's own theorem) ought we to deduce from this, but that the *whole* number of white balls in the urn is to the *whole* number of black balls in the same proportion of 22 to 21; or, in other words, that this is the proportion of the whole number of unborn males to the whole number of unborn females in the womb of futurity? And yet this inference is regarded by Laplace as a proof that the approximation to equality in the number of the two sexes affords no evidence of foresight or design.

"La constance de la supériorité des naissances des garçons sur celles des filles, à Paris et à Londres, depuis qu'on les observe, a paru à quelques savans, être une preuve *de la Providence* sans laquelle ils ont pensé que les causes irrégulières qui troublent sans cesse la marche des évènemens, auroit du plusieurs fois rendre les naissances annuelles des filles, supérieures à celle des garçons.

"Mais cette preuve est un nouvel exemple de l'abus que l'on a fait si souvent des causes finales qui disparaissent toujours par un examen approfondi des questions, lorsqu'on a les données nécessaires pour les résoudre. La constance dont il s'agit, est un résultat des CAUSES REGULIERES qui donnent la supériorité aux naissances des garçons, et qui l'emportent sur les anomalies dues au hazard, lorsque le nombre des naissances annuelles est considérables."[1]

With the proposition announced in the last sentence I perfectly agree. That the constancy of the results, in the instance now in question, depends on *regular causes*, (which in this case is merely a synonymous expression with *general laws*,) the most zealous advocates for a designing cause will be the most forward to admit; and if Laplace means nothing more than to say, that the uniformity of the effect, when observed on a large scale, may be sufficiently explained without supposing the miraculous

[1] Ibid. pp. 84, 85.—[3me edition; 2de edition pp. 103, 104.]

interference of Providence *in each individual birth*, the question does not seem worthy of a controversy. If the person who put the white and black balls into the urn had wished to secure the actual result of the drawing, what other means could he have employed for the purpose than to adjust to each other the relative proportions of these balls *in the whole number of both?* Could any proof more demonstrative be given that this was the very end he had in view?

Nor do I think that the authors whom Laplace opposes ever meant to dispute the operation of these *regular causes*. Dr. Arbuthnot, certainly, one of the earliest writers in this country who brought forward the regular proportion between male and female births as an argument in favour of wise design, not only agrees in this point with Laplace, but has proposed a physical theory to account for this regularity. The theory is, indeed, too ludicrous to deserve a moment's consideration; but it at least shows that Laplace has advanced nothing in favour of his conclusions which had not been previously granted by his adversaries.

The following strictures* on the *Philosophical Essay* of Laplace have all a reference, more or less direct, to the argument stated in the foregoing Appendix.

Under the general title of the doctrine of *Probabilities* two very different things are confounded together by Laplace, as well as by many other writers of an earlier date. The one is the purely mathematical theory of chances; the other the inductive anticipations of future events deduced from observations on the past course of nature. The calculations about dice furnish the simplest of all examples of the first sort of theory. The conclusions to which they lead are as rigorously exact as any other arithmetical propositions; amounting to nothing more than a numerical statement of the ways in which a given event *may* happen, compared with those in which it

* [In the former edition these were entitled APPENDIX III., and arranged accordingly.]

may not happen. Thus, in the case of a single die, the chance that *ace* shall turn up at the first throw, is to the chances against that event as one to five. The more complicated cases of the problem all depend on the application of the same fundamental principle. "This principle," as Condorcet has well remarked, "is only a definition (une vérité de définition;) and consequently the calculations founded on it are all rigorously true."[1]

To this theory of chances Laplace labours, through the whole of his work, to assimilate all the other cases in which mathematics are applied to the *calculus* of probabilities; and I have no doubt that he would have readily subscribed to the following proposition of Condorcet, although I do not recollect that he has anywhere sanctioned it expressly by his authority. "Le motif de croire que sur dix millions de boules blanches mêlées avec une noire ce ne sera point la noire que je tirerai du premier coup est de la même nature que le motif de croire que le soleil ne manquera pas de se lever demain; et les deux opinions ne diffèrent entr'elles que par le plus et le moins de probabilités."

The only writers, as far as I know, by whom this position of Condorcet has yet been controverted, are MM. Prévost and L'Huillier of Geneva, in a very able paper published in the *Memoirs of the Royal Academy of Berlin* for the year 1796.[2] After quoting from Condorcet the passage I have transcribed above, these learned and ingenious philosophers proceed thus:—

"La persuasion analogique qu'éprouve tout homme de voir se répeter un évènement naturel (tel que le lever du soleil) est d'un genre différent de la persuasion représentée par une fraction dans la Théorie des Probabilités. Celle-ci peut lui être ajoutée, mais l'une peut exister sans l'autre. Elles dépendent de deux ordres de facultés différents. Un enfant, un animal éprouve la première, et ne forme aucun calcul explicite,

[1] *Essai sur l'Application de l'Analyse à la Probabilité des Décisions rendues à la pluralité des voix.*—Disc. Prélim. p. 11.

[2] As I have not access at present to the paper referred to, I am somewhat doubtful if my memory may not have deceived me with respect to the volume of the *Berlin Memoirs* in which it appeared. The extracts, which I copy from a manuscript of my own, are, I trust, substantially correct.

ni même implicite. Il n'y a aucune dépendance nécessaire entre ces deux persuasions. Celle que le calcul apprécie est raisonnée et même jusqu'à un certain point artificielle. L'autre est d'instinct et naturelle. Elle dépend de quelques facultés intellectuelles dont l'analyse n'est pas facile, et probablement en très-grande partie du principe de la liaison des idées.

"Je veux prouver maintenant, que tout cet appareil de méthode, si beau, et si utile, par lequel on arrive à calculer la probabilités des causes par ses effets, suppose une estimation antérieure de cette même probabilité ; et qu'en particulier dans toutes les applications intéressantes qu'on peut faire de ce calcul, nous sommes nécessairement guidés par un instinct de persuasion, inappréciable en degré, et que tous nos raisonnemens sur cet objet dépendent de notre confiance en un principe de croyance que le calcul des probabilités ne peut estimer.

". . . . Je dis donc, qu'il y a dans l'homme un principe (qu'on peut nommer instinct de croyance) que suppose toute application du calcul des probabilités. Tant qu'on raisonne dans l'abstrait, on n'est point appelé à se rendre compte des raisons sur lesquelles on fonde l'estimation de la probabilité d'une chance. Mais dans tous les cas concrets ou particuliers, on ne peut déterminer cette probabilité, que par voie d'expérience. Or les cas passés n'étant pas liés aux cas à venir, nous ne les envisageons comme devant donner les mêmes résultats, que par le sentiment sourd irrésistible que nous fait admettre la constance des lois de la nature. Si l'on prend l'exemple d'un dé, on verra que pour arriver à lui donner la construction que le joueur a en vue, l'artiste finalement n'a pu se guider que par quelques expériences antérieures sur de tels instrumens aléatoires, et sur celui-là en particulier. Lors donc qu'il espère les mêmes effets, il se fonde sur une prévoyance dont la raison ne peut être apprecié par le calcul. Et c'est en vain qu'on voudroit sortir de ce cercle, en remontant de cause en cause ; car finalement, toute probabilité qu'on voudra estimer *stochastiquement*, se reduira à cet emblême. On détermine la probabilité de vie par des tables empiriques ; et il en est de

même de la probabilité des phénomènes météorologiques, et autres."

Dr. Price in his *Dissertation on Historical Evidence*, and also in an Essay published in Vol. LIII. of the *Philosophical Transactions*, has fallen into a train of thinking exactly similar to that quoted above from Condorcet.[1] The passage here referred to is well worthy of perusal; but, on the slightest examination, it must appear to every intelligent reader to be liable to the very same objections which have been so strongly urged against Condorcet's principles by MM. Prévost and L'Huillier.

"We trust experience," says Dr. Price, "and expect that the future should resemble the past in the course of Nature, *for the very same reason* that, supposing ourselves otherwise in the dark, we should conclude that a die which has turned an ace oftenest in past trials is mostly marked with aces, and consequently should expect that it will go on to turn the same number oftenest in future trials."[2]—"And so far is it from being true, that the understanding is *not* the faculty which teaches us to rely on experience, that it is capable of determining *in all cases* what conclusions ought to be drawn from it, and what *precise degree* of confidence should be placed in it."[3]

Nothing can be more evident than this, that it is not upon any *reasoning* of this sort that children proceed, when they anticipate the continuance of those laws of Nature, a knowledge of which is indispensably necessary for the preservation of their animal existence. Mr. Hume, although he plainly leaned to the opinion, that this anticipation may be accounted for by the Association of Ideas, has yet, with the most philosophical propriety, given it the name of *an instinct*,* inasmuch as it manifests itself in infants long before the dawn of reason, and is as evidently the result of an arrangement of Nature, as

[1] See Price's *Dissertations*, p. 388, *et seq.*

[2] Ibid. p. 392.

[3] Ibid. p. 398.

* [See *Essays*, Vol. II.; *Inquiry concerning Human Understanding*, Sect. v. part 1 and part 2; sect. xii. part 1 and part 2; *alibi.*]

if it were implanted immediately in their frame by her own hand. It is indeed an instinct common to man and to the brute creation.

That we are able, in many cases, to calculate, with mathematical precision, the probability of future events is indisputable; but so far is this from affording any argument against the instinctive anticipation, the existence of which Dr. Price denies, that all these calculations take for granted (as M. Prévost has observed) that uniformity in the course of Nature which we are thus led to anticipate. The *calculations*, it is true, imply at every step the exercise of the understanding; but that no process of the understanding can account for the origin of the fundamental assumption on which they proceed, has been shown by Mr. Hume (according to my judgment) with demonstrative evidence.

CHAPTER III.

OF THE MORAL ATTRIBUTES OF THE DEITY.

THE observations made in the last article contain some of the principal heads of the argument for the existence of God, and also for his unity, for his power, and for his wisdom. Of the two last of these attributes, we justly say that they are *infinite;* that is, that our conceptions of them always rise in proportion as our faculties are cultivated, and as our knowledge of the universe becomes more extensive. The writers on natural religion commonly give a particular enumeration of attributes, which they divide into the Natural, the Intellectual, and the Moral; and of which they treat at length in a systematical manner. This view of the subject, whatever may be its advantages, could not be adopted with propriety here. The remarks which follow are confined to the evidences of the Divine goodness and justice; those attributes which constitute the moral perfections of the Deity, and which render him the proper object of religious worship.

In applying to the Deity the phrase *moral attributes,* I express myself in conformity to common language; but the object of the following speculations will be better understood when I say, that the scope of my reasonings is to show, in the first place, that there are evidences of *benevolent design* in the universe; and, secondly, that there are evidences of a moral government exercised over man by means of *rewards and punishments;* or, in other words, that the constitution of the human mind, and the course of human affairs, prove that the reward of virtue, and the punishment of vice, is the aim of the general laws by which the world is governed.

SECT. I.—OF THE EVIDENCES OF BENEVOLENT DESIGN IN THE UNIVERSE.

In entering on this subject, we may lay it down as a fundamental principle, that our ideas of the moral attributes of God must be derived from our own moral perceptions. It is only by attending to these that we can form a conception of what his attributes are; and it is in this way we are furnished with the strongest proofs that they really belong to him.

In the course of our inquiries into the principles of morals, it formerly appeared that the power of distinguishing *right* from *wrong* is one of the most remarkable circumstances which raise man above the brutes; and indeed, I apprehend, it is chiefly *this* modification of *reason* we have in view, when we employ that word to express the exclusive characteristic of the human race among the various inhabitants of the globe. I endeavoured farther to show, that to *act* in conformity to this sense of rectitude is the highest excellence which man is capable of attaining; insomuch, that, in comparison of *moral* worth, the most splendid intellectual endowments appear insignificant and contemptible. Nor do these ideas apply only to our own species. I before showed that the constitution of our nature determines us to conceive the distinction between Right and Wrong as Eternal and Immutable; not as arising from an arbitrary accommodation of our frame to the qualities of external objects, like the distinction between agreeable and disagreeable tastes or smells, but as a distinction necessary and essential, and independent of the will of any being whatever,—analogous in this respect to that between mathematical truth and falsehood. We are justified, therefore, in drawing inferences from our own moral judgments with respect to the moral administration of the Deity, on the same ground on which we conclude that what appears to us to be demonstrably true must appear in the same light to all other intelligent beings. And as moral worth is the highest excellence competent to our own nature, we are justified in ranking moral excellence among those

attributes of God which more peculiarly claim our love and adoration.[1]

But not to insist on this metaphysical view of the subject, it is evident, that, if we believe that we have derived our existence from the Deity, we must ascribe to him, in an infinite degree, all those powers and perfections which he has communicated to us, or which he has rendered us capable of acquiring. From our own imperfect *knowledge* we must ascribe to him *omniscience;* from our limited *power* we must ascribe to him *omnipotence;* and, *a fortiori*, from our moral perceptions we must ascribe to him unerring moral rectitude, and goodness unbounded towards his whole creation.

In opposition to this mode of reasoning, sceptics have frequently urged the impropriety of forming a deity after our own image; and have represented the argument I stated for the moral attributes of God as arising from the same illusion of the imagination which leads the vulgar to ascribe to him the human form and organs of perception analogous to our own. But the comparison is by no means just. There is obviously a wide distinction between the possession of a power, and the being limited to the exercise of that power in a particular way. The former is always a perfection, the latter is a mark of an imperfect and dependent being. Thus the possession of knowledge is a perfection, and we may venture to ascribe it in an infinite degree to the Deity; but it would be rash in us, from what we experience in ourselves, to conclude that the Deity investigates truth by those slow processes of deduction which are suited to the weakness of the human faculties. In like manner, although it would be absurd to suppose that the Deity hears and sees in a way analogous to what we experience in ourselves, we *may* without impiety conclude, nay, we *must* from the fact believe, that he possesses in an infinite degree of perfection all our powers of perception, because it is from him that we have received them. "He that made the eye shall he not see? He that made the ear shall he not hear?"—Not indeed by means

[1] On this subject see Cudworth, *Intellectual System*, p. 204; [the same in Birch's edition; and in Mosheim's translation, Lib. I. cap. iv. § 9.]

of bodily organs similar to ours, but in some way far above the reach of our comprehension.

The argument which these considerations afford for the great and important truth I wish to establish at present, is irresistible. Moral excellence appears obviously to constitute the chief perfection of the human mind; and we cannot help considering the moral attributes of God as claiming, in a more especial manner, our love and adoration than either his wisdom or power.

With respect to that particular attribute of the Deity, to which the following reasonings more immediately relate, the general argument applies with singular force. The peculiar sentiment of approbation with which we regard the virtue of beneficence in others, and the peculiar satisfaction with which we reflect on such of our actions as have contributed to the happiness of mankind; to which we may add the exquisite pleasure accompanying the exercise of all the kind affections, naturally lead us to consider benevolence or goodness as the supreme attribute of God. It is difficult indeed to conceive what other motive could have induced a Being, completely and independently happy, to call his creatures into existence.

In this manner then, without going farther than our own moral perceptions, we have a strong argument for the moral attributes of God: and this argument will strike us with the greater force in proportion to the culture which our moral perceptions have received. The same observation may be applied to the moral argument for a future state. The effect of both these arguments on the mind may be in a great measure destroyed by dissipation and profligacy; or (on the other hand) by a sedulous and reverential attention to the moral suggestions of our own breasts, it may be identified with all our habits of thought and of action. It is owing to this that, while the truths of natural religion are regarded by some as the dreams of a warm imagination, they command the assent of others with the evidence of intuitive certainty. "Be persuaded," says Shaftesbury, "that wisdom is more from the *heart* than from the *head*. *Feel* goodness, and you will see all things fair and

good."—"Dwell with honesty, and beauty, and order; study and love what is of this kind, and in time you will know and love the Author."[1]

Impressed with a conviction of the justness and importance of this remark, I have always been of opinion that those who have written in defence of natural religion, have insisted too much on the cold metaphysical argument, which can only prove the power and wisdom of the Deity, and have addressed themselves too little to our moral constitution. It must be owing to this that some sceptical writers, who have admitted the evidence for the *physical* attributes of God, have denied or doubted of the evidence for his *moral* attributes. This in particular was the case with Lord Bolingbroke.[2] The arguments for the physical attributes are addressed to the understanding alone; those for the moral attributes to the heart. If you wish to convince a person who affects to be sceptical on *this* subject, you must begin with attempting to rouse his moral feelings. Convince him of the dignity of his nature, and inspire him with the love of virtue and of mankind, and you have gone far towards accomplishing your object. Just and comfortable views of Providence, and of man's future destination, will follow of course. And here, by the way, we may remark the additional reason which these considerations suggest, why the study of natural religion should not be considered as the foundation of moral philosophy, inasmuch as they show that just views of religion *presuppose* an examination of the moral constitution of man.

The foregoing reasonings rest entirely on our own moral perceptions, without any reference to facts collected from without; and I apprehend that it is only after establishing *a priori* this presumption for the divine goodness that we can proceed to examine the fact with safety. It is true, indeed, that, independently of this presumption, the disorders we see would not demonstrate ill intention in the Author of the Universe, as it would be still possible that the apparent disorders in that small part of it which falls under our observation might contribute

[1] *Letters to a Student at the University*, Letter vi.

[2] *Philosophical Works*, Vol. IV. sections xl, xli.

to the happiness and perfection of the whole system. But the contrary supposition would be equally possible, that there is nothing absolutely good in the universe, and that the communication of suffering is the ultimate end of the laws by which it is governed.

The argument for the goodness of God, derived from our own moral constitution, and strengthened by the consideration of our ignorance of the plans of Providence, affords an answer to all the objections which have been urged against this attribute of the Deity. And the answer is conclusive, whatever the state of the fact may be with respect to the magnitude of the evils of which we complain.

"Imagine only," says Shaftesbury, "some person entirely a stranger to navigation, and ignorant of the nature of sea or waters: How great his astonishment, when, finding himself on board some vessel anchored at sea remote from all land prospect, whilst it was yet a calm, he viewed the ponderous machine firm and motionless in the midst of the smooth ocean, and considered its foundation beneath, together with its cordage, masts, and sails above—how easily would he see the *whole* one regular structure, all things depending on another; the uses of the rooms below, the lodgements, and the conveniences of men and stores? But, being ignorant of the intent or design of all above, would he pronounce the masts and cordage to be useless and cumbersome, and for this reason condemn the frame and despise the Architect? O my friend! let us not thus betray our ignorance, but consider where we are, and in what an universe. Think of the many parts of the vast machine in which we have so little insight, and of which it is impossible we should know the ends and uses: when, instead of seeing to the highest pendants, we see only some lower deck, and are in this dark case of flesh confined even to the hold and meanest station of the vessel."*

But although this answer might silence our objections, something more is requisite on a subject so momentous, to support

* [*Characteristics*, Vol. II. *The Moralists*, Part ii. sect. 4, p. 289, edition of 1711.]

our confidence, and to animate our hopes. If no account could be given of the evils of life, but that they *may possibly* be good relatively to the whole universe;—still more, if it should appear that the sufferings of life overbalance its enjoyments, it could hardly be expected that any speculative reasoning would have much effect in banishing the melancholy suggestions of scepticism. We are therefore naturally led, in the *first* place, to inquire whether some explanation may not be given *of the origin of evil*, from a consideration of the facts which fall under our notice; and, *secondly*, to compare together the happiness and the misery which the world exhibits.

The question concerning *the origin of evil* has, from the earliest times, employed the ingenuity of speculative men; and various theories have been proposed to solve the difficulty. The most celebrated of these are the following:—

(1.) The Doctrine of Pre-existence.

(2.) The Doctrine of the Manichæans.

(3.) The Doctrine of Optimism.

1. According to the first hypothesis, the evils we suffer at present are punishments and expiations of moral delinquencies committed in a former stage of our being.

This was a favourite opinion of the ancient philosophers, and is maintained by Socrates in the *Phœdon* of Plato, where the first idea of the doctrine seems to be ascribed to Orpheus as its author.[1] "The disciples of Orpheus," says he, "called the body a prison, because the soul is here in a state of punishment till it has expiated the faults that it committed in Heaven. Souls that are too much given to bodily pleasures, and are in a manner besotted, wander upon the earth, and are put into new bodies; for all sensuality and passion cause the soul to have a stronger attachment to the body, make her fancy that she is of the same nature, and render her in a manner corporeal, so that she contracts an incapacity of flying away into another life. Oppressed with the weight of her impurity

[1] See Ramsay's *Discourse on the Mythology of the Pagans*, [Part II. of the *Theology of the Ancients*, (appended to his *Travels of Cyrus*,) pp. 86, 87.]

and corruption, she sinks again into matter, and becomes thereby disabled to remount towards the regions of purity, and attain to a re-union with her principle."*

In the dialogue entitled *Politicus*, Plato, mentioning this primitive state of man, calls it the reign of Saturn, and describes it thus:—"God was then the Prince and common Father of all; he governed the world by himself, as he governs it now by inferior deities; rage and cruelty did not then prevail upon earth; war and sedition were not so much as known. God himself took care of the sustenance of mankind, and was their guardian and shepherd. There were no magistrates nor civil polity as there are now. In those happy days men sprung out of the bosom of the earth, which produced them of itself like flowers and trees. The fertile fields yielded fruits and corn without the labour of tillage. Mankind stood in no need of raiment to cover their bodies, being troubled with no inclemency of the seasons; and they took their rest on turf of a perpetual verdure. Under the reign of Jupiter, Saturn, the master of the universe, having quitted the reins of his empire, hid himself in an inaccessible retreat. The inferior gods who governed under him retired likewise; the very foundations of the world were shaken by motions contrary to its principle and its end, and it lost its beauty and its lustre. Then it was that good and evil were blended together. But in the end, lest the world should be plunged in an eternal abyss of confusion, God, the Author of the Primitive Order, will appear again and resume the reins of empire. Then he will change, amend, embellish, and restore the whole frame of nature, and put an end to decay, to age, to diseases, and to death."†

In order to understand some expressions in the foregoing passage, it is necessary to know that Plato gave the name of the *first earth* to the place where souls made their abode before their degradation. "The earth," he says, "is immense; we know, and we inhabit only a small corner of it. That ethereal earth, the ancient abode of souls, is placed in the pure regions

* [Ramsay gives his own summary, not a translation of Plato.]

† [See last Note. The reference to himself is pp. 93 95.]

of Heaven, where the stars are seated. We that live in this low abyss are apt enough to fancy that we are in a high place, and we call the air the heavens: just like a man that from the bottom of the sea should view the sun and the stars through the water, and fancy the ocean to be the firmament itself. But if we had wings to mount on high, we should see that THERE is the true Heaven, the true light, and the true earth. As in the sea everything is altered and disfigured by the salts that abound in it, so in our present earth everything is deformed, corrupted, and in a ruinous condition, if compared with the primitive earth." Of this ethereal earth, whereof ours is only a broken crust, Plato gives afterwards a magnificent description. "Everything there," says he, "was beautiful, harmonious, and transparent; fruits of an excellent taste grew there naturally; and it was watered with rivers of nectar. They there breathed the light, as we here breathe the air, and they drank waters purer than air itself."*

The sublimity of some of these ideas cannot be disputed; and it would lead into a wide field of interesting disquisition, to trace their origin and their connexion with other systems which have been adopted in different countries. At present, we are concerned with this doctrine only in so far as it is offered as an account of the origin of evil; and for this purpose it is sufficient to remark—1*st*, That it is merely an hypothesis, unsupported by any evidence; and 2*d*, That the hypothesis (even if we were to admit it) only removes the difficulty a little out of sight, without affording any explanation of it. If the permission of evil, in any former stage of our being, was consistent with the perfections of God, why not in that state which we occupy at present? I pass over various weighty objections which might be founded on the absurdity of supposing the soul to expiate, by its present sufferings, faults of which it does not now retain any remembrance, and for which, of consequence, it cannot feel any remorse; a supposition plainly inconsistent with itself, inasmuch as the only effect of *punishment*, as a remedy

* [See *Phædo*, Sect. 60, *seq.*; *Wytt.* Sect. 130, *seq.*, *aliis*. The reference to Ramsay is pp. 88-90.]

for our moral diseases, must arise from the experimental warning it affords to the delinquent of the inseparable connexion between vice and misery.

2*d*, The second theory that was mentioned with respect to the origin of evil, is that of the Manichæans, who endeavour to obviate the difficulty by the opposite agencies of two co-eternal and independent principles, the one the author of all the good, the other of all the evil in the universe.

This theory derives its name from Manichæus or Manes, a Chaldean or Babylonian by birth, who was born about the year 240 of the Christian era. The theory, however, is of a much more early origin, having been taught by the Persian Magi, whose doctrines on the subject are fully explained by Plutarch in his Treatise of *Isis and Osiris*.* "Zoroaster," he tells us, "taught that there are two gods, contrary to each other in their operations; a good and an evil principle. To the former he gave the name of *Oromazes*, and to the latter that of *Arimanius*. The one, he says, resembles light and truth, the other darkness and ignorance. There is likewise a middle god between these two, named *Mithras*. The Magi add, that Oromazes is born of the purest light, and Arimanius of darkness; that they continually make war upon one another; and that Oromazes made six genii—Goodness, Truth, Justice, Wisdom, Plenty, and Joy; and Arimanius made six others to oppose them—Malice, Falsehood, Injustice, Folly, Want, and Sadness." They hold farther, that "a time will come, appointed by Fate, when Arimanius will be entirely destroyed and extirpated; the earth will change its form, and become plain and even; and happy men will have only one and the same life, language, and government."[1]

Of the particular form in which this doctrine was afterwards proposed by Manes, a full account is given by Beausobre in his *History of Manichæism*, an abstract of which account may be found in Jortin's *Remarks on Ecclesiastical History*. It is not worth our while at present to enter into any details on the subject.

In modern times, M. Bayle has employed all the powers of

* [*Plutarchi Opera*, Tom. II. p. 369, editiones Xylandri.]

[1] See Ramsay, *On the Mythology of the Ancients*.

his lively and acute genius in adorning the Manichæan system, and in representing it as the most plausible of all the solutions that have ever been proposed of the origin of evil. He grants, at the same time, that this system is indefensible; and hence takes occasion to insinuate the futility of human reason, and to recommend to his readers an unlimited scepticism as the most important lesson to be learned from the controversy.

The celebrity of M. Bayle's name has induced several writers of eminence to examine this part of his works with a greater degree of attention than so very absurd a speculation seems to have merited. Among others Le Clerc, first in his *Parrhasiana*, and afterwards in his *Bibliothèque Choisie*. I shall not enter at all into the discussion, nor even attempt a statement of the reasonings *a priori* which have been urged in opposition to Bayle. A sufficient refutation of his opinions on this point may, I hope, be derived from what has been already advanced in proof of the *unity of design* manifested in every part of nature; a proposition which I shall have occasion to illustrate still more fully in the farther prosecution of this argument, and which appears to have struck Mr. Hume himself so forcibly, that he rejects the supposition of two opposite principles "*as altogether unsuitable to the phenomena of the universe.*"*

Before leaving this head it may be worth while to remark, that what we know of the tenets of this sect is derived entirely from the writings of their adversaries, as none of their own have survived to modern times. The most authentic documents of them may unquestionably be collected from the works of St. Augustine, who was himself educated in the heretical opinions of the Manichæans, and did not abandon them till he was able to think and to judge for himself. It may be reasonably presumed, therefore, not only that he was thoroughly acquainted with the details of their history, but that he represents them without any undue prejudice against their spirit and tendency.

3*d*, The fundamental principle of the *Optimists* is, that all events are ordered for the best; and that the evils which we

* [*Dialogues concerning Natural Religion*, Part xi.]

suffer are parts of a great system conducted by Almighty power under the direction of infinite wisdom and goodness.

Under this general title, however, are comprehended two very different descriptions of philosophers,—those who admit, and those who deny the freedom of human actions and the accountableness of man as a moral agent. The former only contend that everything is right, so far as it is the work of God; and endeavour to show that the creation of beings endowed with free-will, and consequently liable to moral delinquency; and the government of the world by general laws, from which occasional evils *must* result, furnish no solid objection to the perfection of the universe. But they hold at the same time, that, although the permission of moral evil does not detract from the goodness of God, it is nevertheless imputable to man as a fault, and renders him justly obnoxious to punishment. This system (under a variety of different forms) has been in all ages maintained by the best and wisest philosophers, who, while they were anxious to vindicate the perfections of the Deity, saw the importance of stating their doctrine in a manner consistent with man's free-will and moral agency. I need scarcely add, that this is precisely the doctrine of Scripture. "The Judge of the whole earth, shall he not do right?" —"It is impossible but that offences will come; but woe unto him through whom they come."[1]

It is of great importance to attend to the distinction between these two systems, because it is customary among sceptical writers to confound them studiously together, in order to extend to

[1] [Gen. xviii. 25; Luke xvii. 1.]—"The result of what Locke advances on this subject," says Dr. Warton, "is,—that we have a power of doing what we will. If it be the occasion of disorder, it is the cause of order, of all the moral order that appears in the world. Had liberty been excluded, virtue had been excluded with it. And if this had been the case, the world could have had no charms, no beauties sufficient to recommend it to him who made it. In short, all other powers and perfections would have been very defective without this, which is truly the life and spirit of the whole creation."—Warton's *Notes on Pope.*

In what part of Locke's works Warton found the above passage he has not mentioned; and I confess I have some suspicion that he has committed a mistake with respect to the author. The passage, however, does Locke no discredit, and I have no doubt expresses his real sentiments on the subject.

both that ridicule to which the latter is justly entitled. This in particular was the case with *Voltaire*, who in many parts of his works, and more especially in a small treatise entitled *Candide ou l'Optimisme*, has exerted all the powers of his wit and ingenuity on the subject, arriving at last at this general conclusion, that the only possible way of reconciling the origin of evil with the moral attributes of God, is to deny his omnipotence.

The attempt which this very lively writer, as well as many other modern sceptics have made to ridicule the scheme of *optimism*, has been much facilitated by the confused and inaccurate manner in which it has been stated by some who have proposed and defended it with the best intentions. Among this number we must include Pope, who undoubtedly meant to inculcate this system in its most unexceptionable form, but who has fallen into various unguarded expressions that appear favourable to fatalism.

> "If plagues and earthquakes break not Heaven's design,
> Why, then, a Borgia or a Catiline?"*
> &c. &c. &c.

With respect to these unguarded expressions, there is an anecdote mentioned by Dr. Warton in his *Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope*, that helps to account for their admission into this poem, without leading us to question the sincerity of Pope's zeal for the great principles of morality and religion. The late Lord Bathurst, we are told, had read the whole scheme of the *Essay on Man* in the handwriting of Bolingbroke, and drawn up in a series of propositions, which Pope was to versify and illustrate. The same author mentions, upon what he thinks good authority, that Bolingbroke was accustomed to ridicule Pope, as not understanding the drift of his own principles in their full extent; an anecdote which is by no means improbable, when we compare the passage already quoted, and some others to the same purpose, with the author's explicit declarations in favour of man's free agency.

* [*Essay on Man*, Ep. i. 155.]

"What makes all physical and moral ill?—
There deviates nature, and here wanders will." *

And still more directly in his *Universal Prayer*:

"Yet gav'st me in this dark estate,
To know the good from ill;
And binding Nature fast in fate,
Left free the human will."

I have entered into these particulars with respect to the *Essay on Man*, partly with a view of illustrating the distinction already hinted at between the two different forms in which the system of optimism has been proposed, and partly to have an opportunity of directing the attention of my readers to the noblest specimen of philosophical poetry which our language affords; and which, with the exception of a very few passages, contains a valuable summary of all that human reason has been able hitherto to advance in justification of the moral government of God. I now proceed to state the principal heads of this argument in that form in which it appears most satisfactory to my own mind; premising only, that, after all that reason can allege on this subject, there still remain insuperable difficulties connected with it which nothing but revelation can explain.

All the different subjects of human complaint may be reduced to two classes, *moral* and *physical* evils: the former comprehending those which arise from the abuse of free-will; the latter those which result from the established laws of nature, and which man cannot prevent by his own efforts. These two classes of our evils, although they are often blended together in fact, will require, in the prosecution of this argument, a separate consideration.

I. It is justly observed by Butler, "that all we enjoy, and a great part of what we suffer, is *put in our own power;* for pleasure and pain are the consequences of our actions; and we are endued by the Author of our Nature with capacities for *foreseeing* these consequences. We find by experience he does

* [*Essay on Man*, Ep. iv. 111.]

not so much as preserve our lives, exclusively of our own care and attention, to provide ourselves with, and to make sure of that sustenance by which he has appointed our lives shall be preserved, and without which he has appointed they shall not be preserved at all. And in general we foresee, that the external things which are the objects of our various passions, can neither be obtained nor enjoyed without exerting ourselves in such and such manners; but by thus exerting ourselves we obtain and enjoy those objects in which our natural good consists. I know not that we have any one kind or degree of enjoyment but by the means of our own actions. And by prudence and care we may for the most part pass our days in tolerable ease and quiet; or, on the contrary, we may, by rashness, ungoverned passion, wilfulness, or even by negligence, make ourselves as miserable as ever we please."*

Now, in so far as happiness and misery depend on ourselves, the question with respect to the permission of evil is reduced to this, why was Man made a Free Agent? Or, in other words, why does not the Author of Nature make his creatures happy without the instrumentality of their own actions, and put it out of their power to incur misery by vice and folly? A question to which (if it is not too presumptuous to subject it to our discussion) the two following considerations seem to afford a sufficient answer.

1*st*, In the first place, we may observe that perhaps the object of the Deity in the government of the world is not merely to communicate happiness, but to form his creatures to moral excellence; a purpose for the accomplishment of which it was absolutely necessary to bestow on them a freedom of choice between good and evil. This observation is hinted at by Butler in the following passage:—"Perhaps the Divine goodness, with which, if I mistake not, we make very free in our speculations, may not be a bare single disposition to produce happiness; but a disposition to make the good, the faithful, the honest man happy. Perhaps an infinitely perfect mind may be pleased with seeing his creatures behave suitably to the nature which he has

* [*Analogy*, Part I. ch. ii.]

given them; to the relations in which he has placed them to each other; and to that which they stand in to himself, which during their existence is even necessary, and which is the most important one of all. Perhaps, I say, an infinitely perfect mind may be pleased with the moral piety of moral agents in and for itself, as well as upon account of its being essentially conducive to the happiness of his creation."*

2*d*, A second supposition which may be suggested in answer to the foregoing question is, that perhaps the enjoyment of high degrees of happiness may necessarily require the previous acquisition of virtuous habits; in which case a greater sum of happiness is produced by the present order of things than could have been gained by any other. Nor is this merely a gratuitous supposition; for we know from the fact, that the highest enjoyments of which our nature is susceptible, arise from a conscientious discharge of our duty, and from the possession of those qualities which virtuous habits have a tendency to form or to inspire.

The sufferings produced by vice are on this supposition instances of the goodness of God, no less than the happiness resulting from virtue. The final cause of both is the same,—to promote the improvement of our nature; as it is from the same motive of love that an affectionate parent rewards the obedience, and punishes the disobedience of his child. It is, I think, a very fine and profound observation of Maupertuis, "That the concern which arises from repentance and remorse, is more allied to pleasure than to pain. It contains a cure for that distress which it brings along with it, and a preservative against future pains of the same kind. The more sensibly they are felt at any particular time, we shall be in less danger of feeling them afterwards."[1] I would add, however, as a necessary limitation of this remark, that it applies only to those

* [Ibid.]

[1] *Essai de Philosophie Morale*, chap. iii.

An idea similar to this occurs in the following lines of *De Lille*:—

. . . "L'âme, quelquefois, par le remords s'épure;
Il fait servir au bien le vice qui n'est plus,
Et cet enfant du crime est garant des vertus."
L'Imagination, Chant ii.

slighter deviations from duty which may occasionally occur in the conduct of men habitually virtuous; for in the case of crimes of a deeper dye, and which unfit a man to continue any longer a member of society, remorse produces the unmixed agonies of despair.

II. These observations justify Providence not only for the permission of moral evil, but for the permission of many things which are commonly complained of as physical evils. How great is the proportion of these which are the obvious consequences of our vices and prejudices; and which, so far from being a necessary part of the order of nature, seem intended, in the progress of human affairs, as a gradual remedy against the causes which produce them? Suppose, for a moment, vice and prejudice banished from the world, what a train of miseries would be banished along with them! The physical evils that would remain would in truth almost vanish into nothing, when compared with the magnitude of those under which the human race groans at present. Now, whatever evils are consequences of vice and prejudice are not a *necessary* part of the order of nature. On the contrary, they lead to a correction of the abuses from which they spring. They warn us that there is something amiss in our own conduct or in that of other men; and they stimulate our exertions in the search of a remedy, as those occasional pains to which the body is liable tend to the preservation of health and vigour, by the intimation they give of our internal disorders.

Some of our other complaints with respect to the lot of humanity will be found, on examination, to arise from partial views of the constitution of man, and from a want of attention to the circumstances which promote his improvement, or which constitute his happiness. Such are those which sceptics have so often founded on a consideration of that life of labour and exertion, both of body and of mind, to which we are doomed by the necessities of our nature;—doomed as we are to "eat our bread in the sweat of our brows."

When we compare the condition of man, at the moment of his first appearance on this scene, with that of some other animals, he appears to be in many respects their inferior. His infancy is more helpless, and of much longer duration; and even after the care of the parent has reared him to maturity, he is destitute of the essential advantages they enjoy in consequence of the formation of their bodies, and of the variety of their instincts. One animal is armed with the horn, another with the tusk, a third with the paw; most of them are covered with furs, or with skins of a sufficient thickness to protect them from the inclemencies of the seasons; and all of them are directed by instinct in what manner they may choose or construct the most convenient habitation for securing themselves from danger, and for rearing their offspring. The human infant alone enters the world naked and unarmed; exposed without a covering to the fury of the elements; surrounded with enemies, which far surpass him in strength or agility; and totally ignorant in what way he is to procure the comforts, or even the necessaries of life. Notwithstanding, however, the unpromising aspect of his original condition, *man* has no just cause to complain of the bounty of nature; for it is in the apparent disadvantages of his condition, in the multiplicity of his wants, and in the urgency of his necessities, that the foundation is laid of that superiority which he is destined to acquire over all the other inhabitants of the globe. "*Flens animal,*" says Pliny, speaking of the human infant—"*Flens animal, cæteris imperaturum.*"*

The necessity of certain inconveniences in our external circumstances, to rouse the energies and to improve the capacities of the human mind, is strongly illustrated by the comparatively low state of the intellectual powers, in such tribes of our species as derive the necessaries and accommodations of life from the immediate bounty of nature. No other explanation can, I think, be given of those peculiarities in the genius of some of the South Sea islanders, which have been remarked by some of our late navigators, particularly by Dr. Forster in his *Account of the Inhabitants of Otaheite.* "The natives of Otaheite," he

* [*Nat. Hist.* Lib. VII. Proœmium.—See *Works*, Vol. IV. pp. 281, 288.]

informs us, "and the adjacent Society Isles, are generally of a lively brisk temper, great lovers of mirth and laughter, and of an open, easy, benevolent character. Their natural levity hinders them from paying a long attention to any one thing. You might as well undertake to fix mercury as to keep their mind steady on the same subject."

Such, indeed, is the constitution of the human mind, that it may be safely affirmed that any individual might be fixed through life in a state of infantine imbecility, by withholding every stimulus to his active exertions, and by gratifying every want as fast as it arose. It is with much judgment, therefore, that Virgil mentions the origin of the arts as a necessary consequence of the changes in the natural world subsequent to the golden age.

> "Tum variæ venere artes: labor omnia vicit
> Improbus, et duris urgens in rebus egestas." *

And that he refers this introduction of indigence and labour to a benevolent intention in Providence.

> . . . . "Pater ipse colendi
> Haud facilem esse viam voluit, primusque per artem
> Movit agros, curis acuens mortalia corda,
> Nec torpere gravi passus sua regna veterno." †

Nor is the activity of life merely the school of wisdom and of virtue to man; it is the great source of his present *enjoyment.*

"If we attempt," says Dr. Ferguson, "to conceive such a scene as some sceptics would require to evince the wisdom and goodness of God, a scene in which every desire were at once gratified without delay, difficulty or trouble, it is evident that on such supposition the end of every active pursuit would be anticipated; exertion would be prevented, every faculty remain unemployed, and mind itself would be no more than a consciousness of languor under an oppression of weariness, such as satiety and continued inoccupation are known to produce.

"On this supposition all the active powers which distinguish human nature would be superfluous, and only serve to disturb

* [*Georg.* i. 145.] † [Ibid. i. 121.]

his peace, or to sour the taste of those inferior pleasures which appear to be consistent with indolence and sloth."[1]

"The happiness of man when most distinguished," continues the same author, "is not proportioned to his external possessions, but to the exertion and application of his faculties. It is not proportioned to his exemption from danger, but to the magnanimity, courage, and fortitude with which he acts. It is not proportioned to the benefits he receives, but to those he bestows; or rather to the candour and benevolence with which, as a person obliging and obliged, he is ready to embrace his fellow-creatures, and to acknowledge or reward their merits. Even while he complains of his lot he is not unhappy. His complaints are no more than the symptoms of a mind that is engaged in some pursuit, by which his wishes are engrossed, but of which the end is still unobtained. In the absence of such occupations and troubles as are prescribed by necessity, he devises for the most part a similar course of occupations, trouble, difficulty, and danger for himself.

"The rich and the powerful (say the vulgar) are happy, for they are exempted from labour and care. Their pleasures come unsought for, and without any alloy of pain. But what are the high objects of ambition to which the wealthy and the powerful aspire? Are they not often situations of great trouble and danger, in continual application to arduous affairs of state, or in frequent exposure to the dangers of war? What do the idle devise to fill up the blank of real affairs? Not a bed of repose, nor a succession of inert and slothful enjoyments; they devise sports that engage them in labour and toil not less severe than that of the indigent man who works for his bread; and expose themselves to dangers not less real than those which occur in what are thought the most hazardous pursuits of human life.

"In the intermission of business, and in the absence of danger, what has the secure and the idle, under the denomination of play, devised for his own recreation? A course of serious

[1] *Principles of Moral and Political Science*, Vol. I. p. 178, [Part I. chap. ii. sect. 16.]

and intense application, a state of suspense between good and ill fortune, between profit and loss. While he strenuously labours to obtain the one and to avoid the other, he calls the one a *good* and the other an *evil;* but he has himself voluntarily incurred the chance of good and evil. He exults in gain, and he laments his loss; but he still freely embraces the chance by which he is exposed to one or the other. The game, such as it is, he considers as a fit pastime for himself; and though he complains of his fortune when unsuccessful, he is never so unreasonable as to arraign the Inventor of the game for having admitted the possibility of ill as well as good fortune.

"The passion for play is comparatively mean and unworthy; but the illustration it brings to the condition of man is apposite, and will justify the terms in which we conclude, that in the game of human life the Inventor knew well how to accommodate the players."[1]

For the subjects of those complaints which have been now under our consideration, a foundation is laid in the general laws of nature, and in the constitution of the human mind. The one is adapted to the other, as the fin of the fish is adapted to the water, or the wing of the bird to the air; and if the order of things was changed in conformity to our wishes, the world would be no longer a scene fitted for such beings as inhabit it at present. Our complaints are founded in our ignorant conceptions of our real good, which lead us to mistake what are in truth excellencies and beauties in the scheme of Providence, for imperfections and deformities.

The circumstances on which these complaints are founded are in some degree common to the whole race; and wherever this is the case, I believe it will not be difficult to trace the beneficent purposes of Providence. But what account shall we give of the evils produced by what are commonly called the *accidents* of life; accidents from which no state of society, how perfect soever, can possibly be exempted; and which, if they be subservient to any benevolent purposes, contribute to none

[1] *Principles of Moral and Political Science*, Vol. I. pp. 185-187, [Part I. chap. ii. sect. 16.]

within the sphere of our knowledge? What account shall we give of those cruel calamities which so often overwhelm individuals, and aggravate the miseries of their condition so far beyond the common lot of humanity? That troubles should occur in the life of man we can see obvious reasons; and in fact they do occur in a sufficient degree in the life of the most fortunate. But why those awful strokes that so often fall on men of inoffensive or virtuous habits, and who do not seem to stand more in need of the school of adversity than many around them who enjoy in security all the goods of fortune?

On such occasions we must no doubt be frequently forced to acknowledge that the ways of Providence are unsearchable, and we must strive to fortify our minds by the pious hope, that the sufferings we endure at present are subservient to some beneficial plan which we are unable to comprehend. In the meantime, it is of the utmost consequence for us always to recollect, that accidents of this sort are inseparable from a state of things where the inhabitants are free agents, and where the Deity governs by general laws. They could not be prevented but by particular interpositions, or in other words, by suspending occasionally the general laws by which his administration is conducted. That the evils resulting from such suspensions would far outweigh the partial good to be gained from them is obvious even to our limited faculties.

With respect to these *general laws*, their tendency will be found in every instance favourable to order and to happiness. This observation, I am persuaded, will appear, upon an accurate examination, to hold without any exception whatever; and it is one of the noblest employments of philosophy to verify and illustrate its universality, by investigating the beneficent purposes to which the laws of nature are subservient. Now it is evidently from these general laws alone that the ultimate ends of Providence can be judged of, and not from their accidental collisions with the partial interests of individuals; collisions, too, which so often arise from an abuse of their moral liberty. It is the great error of the vulgar (who are incapable of comprehensive views) to attempt to read the ways of Pro-

vidence in particular events, and to judge favourably or unfavourably of the order of the universe from its accidental effects with respect to themselves or their friends. Perhaps, indeed, this disposition is inseparable in some degree from the weakness of humanity. But surely *it is* a weakness that we ought to strive to correct; and the more we *do* correct it, the more pleasing our conceptions of the universe become. Accidental inconveniences disappear when compared with the magnitude of the advantages which it is the object of the general laws to secure: "Or," as one author has expressed it, "scattered evils are lost in the blaze of superabundant goodness, as the spots on the disc of the sun are lost in the splendour of his rays."

While the laws of nature thus appear to be favourable to order and to happiness in their general tendency, salutary effects arise from the influence of "time and chance" on human affairs. If the goods of fortune were distributed with an exact regard to the merits of individuals, the selfish passions of men would coincide in every instance with the sense of duty; and no occasion would be furnished for those efforts of self-denial by which our characters are displayed, and our moral habits confirmed.

Many of our moral qualities, too, are the result of habits which imply the existence of physical evil. Patience, fortitude, humanity, all suppose a scene in which sufferings are to be endured in our own case, or relieved in the case of others.

Thus it appears, not only that partial evils *may* be good with respect to the whole system, but that their tendency *is* beneficial, on the whole, even to that small part of it which we see.

The argument for the goodness of God, which arises from the foregoing considerations, will be much strengthened if it shall appear farther, that the sum of happiness in human life far exceeds the sum of misery.[1] For our satisfaction on this

[1] An Essay on this subject by Maupertuis, published about the middle of the last century, maintaining the preponderance of misery over happiness in

point it will be necessary for us to recur again to the distinction formerly made between *moral* and *physical evils*, and to consider how the balance appears to stand between *them*, and

human life, drew a good deal of attention, both in France and England, from the high mathematical reputation of the author. His reasonings are not of sufficient consequence to induce me to interrupt the train of these observations by a formal refutation, but I shall touch in this note on the principal heads of his argument.

1. He lays great stress on the love of variety, or the perpetual desire of changing our situation. "La vie est-elle autre chose qu'un souhait continuel de changer de perception? elle se passe dans les désirs; et tout l'intervalle qui en sépare l'accomplissement nous le voudrions anéanti."

In answer to this it may be remarked, that our perpetual desire of change is not always a proof of a sense of misery. It often arises from a desire of some *addition to our happiness*, which we imagine to be placed within our reach. Maupertuis thinks that the interval between the commencement of desire and the enjoyment is painful. The contrary has been the common opinion, and is the just one.

"'Tis the pursuit rewards the active mind,
And what in rest we seek, in toil we find."

2. Maupertuis considers our love of amusement as a proof of our misery. "Tous les divertissemens des hommes prouvent le malheur de leur condition. Ce n'est que pour éviter des perceptions fâcheuses que celui-ci joue aux échecs, que cet autre court à la chasse: Tous cherchent dans des occupations sérieuses ou frivoles l'oubli d'eux-memes."

On the contrary, we never desire amusement but when our situation is comparatively easy and comfortable.

3. Maupertuis asserts that few would choose to live over their lives a second time. "On en trouvera bien peu qui voulussent recommencer leur vie telle qu'elle a été, qui voulussent repasser par tous les mêmes états dans lesquels ils se sont trouvés."

Our sentiments on this subject are warped by our opinions, our hopes, and our fears, concerning futurity. The fact may be doubted in all its extent. *Admitting* the fact, it would only prove, that, with the feelings we have at the close of life, we could not relish those pleasures we formerly enjoyed. A man after the pleasures of the day may enjoy the repose of night, without giving any ground to conclude that the day was unhappy. Even supposing the mind to retain its vigour and its sensibility, the repetition of the same pleasures would produce satiety; but our pleasures are not the less real while we continue to enjoy them, that they cease to please by long repetition.

At an earlier period than Maupertuis, Wollaston indulged views of human life tinctured in some degree with the same gloom, and is represented by Bolingbroke, who calls him "a whining philosopher," as maintaining the same paradox with regard to the preponderance of misery. In this instance Bolingbroke appears to me to have done him considerable injustice; but supposing the charge to be well grounded, (a question which we have not time to settle at present,) the following remarks of the noble author may be safely subscribed to.

"Let us be convinced, however, in opposition to atheists and divines, that the general state of mankind, in the present scheme of Providence, is a state not only tolerable but happy. Without having Wollaston's balance, wherein he weighs happiness and misery even to

the two corresponding sources of happiness or good, upon a general survey of what passes in the world.

Before entering on the first of these heads, I think it necessary to observe, that when I speak of the preponderancy of *moral good* in the world, I do not mean to draw any inference in favour of the secret springs of human conduct, as they appear in the sight of that Being who alone is acquainted with every thought of the heart; but only to illustrate the kind provision which is made in the constitution of man, and in the circumstances of his condition, for the growth and culture of those dispositions which are favourable to the happiness of individuals, and to the good order of society;—of those dispositions, in short, which it is the object of wise laws to secure, and of wise systems of education to encourage and to cherish. Nor does the scope of my argument lead to any conclusion concerning the comparative numbers of good and bad men.[1] The lives of the best will not bear a moment's comparison with the moral law engraven on our hearts; but still it may be true, that (corrupted as mankind are) the proportion of human life which is spent in vice is inconsiderable when compared with the whole of its extent. The fact, undoubtedly, if on examination it should appear at all probable, would afford an additional illustration of the beneficent arrangements made by our Creator for the good order and for the happiness of this world; and might

grains and scruples, we may pronounce that there is much more good than evil in it; and prove what we pronounce even by his authority, and that of all those who deny it like him, if any such authority can be wanting. It is plain that every man has more good than evil in actual enjoyment, or in prospect, since every man prefers existing as he is to non-existence, and since none of them, not those who suffer the worst accidents in life, are willing to abandon it, and to go out of the state these declaimers represent to be so miserable. The proposition may be advanced thus generally, because there are very few examples to the contrary, and those are of men run mad by distemper, or made so by some prevailing enthusiasm. . . . . What our author's circumstances were of any kind I am ignorant. But whatever they were I am persuaded you will be of my opinion, that any charitable person who had offered to cut his throat, in order only to deliver him from the miseries he complained of in such lamentable terms, would have been very ill received."—Bolingbroke's *Philosophical Works*, Vol. IV. pp. 386, 387. [Fragment fifty.]

[1] See Dr. Law's *Translation of Archbishop King's Essay on the Origin of Evil*, p. 420, Note A A, fourth edition.

suggest a salutary lesson to legislators to study *the intentions of nature*, as the best guides in the science of jurisprudence; or (to express myself in less equivocal language) to trust, in the administration of human affairs, *more* than they have been commonly disposed to do, to those provisions which have been made for the comfort and for the improvement of the species by the beneficent wisdom of God.

1. And here, in the *first* place, I would observe, with respect to the balance of *moral* good and evil, that a fact already taken notice of, in treating of the *desire of power*, [Vol. I. pp. 159, 160,] affords of itself a complete decision of the question.

[*a.*] How few are the opportunities which most individuals enjoy of rendering any extensive service to their fellow-creatures! And how completely is it in the power of the most insignificant person to disturb the happiness of thousands! If the benevolent dispositions of mankind, therefore, had not a very decided predominance over the principles which give rise to competition and enmity, what a different aspect would society have from what it actually presents to us; or rather, how would it be possible for the existence of society to be continued?

[*b.*] There is another fact which strongly confirms the same conclusion,—the constant exertion and circumspection necessary to acquire and maintain a good name in the world; a circumspection not only in avoiding any gross violation of duty, but in avoiding even the appearance of evil. For how often does it happen that a well-earned reputation, the fruit of a long and virtuous life, is blasted at once by a single inconsiderate action, —not perhaps proceeding from any very criminal motive, but from a momentary forgetfulness of what is due to public opinion! The common complaint, therefore, we hear of the prevalence of vice in the world, (I mean the opinion of good and candid men on the subject, for I speak not at present of the follies of the splenetic and censorious,) ought rather to be considered as proofs of the high standard of excellence presented to our view by the Author of our moral constitution, than as proofs of any peculiar degeneracy in the manners of our contemporaries.

[c.] It is of importance to remark how small is the number of individuals who draw the attention of the world by their crimes, when compared with the millions who pass their days in inoffensive obscurity. Of this it is scarcely necessary to produce any other proof than the fact which is commonly urged on the opposite side of the argument,—the catalogue of crimes and of calamities which sully the history of past ages. For whence is the interest we take in historical reading, but from the singularity of the events it records, and from the contrast which its glaring colours present to the uniformity and repose of private life?

We may add to this observation, that even in those unhappy periods which have furnished the most ample materials to the historian, the storm has spent its rage in general on a comparatively small number of men placed in the more conspicuous stations of society by their birth, by their talents, by their ambition, or by an heroical sense of duty, while the unobserved multitude saw it pass over their head, or only heard its noise at a distance. Nor must we pronounce (among men called upon to the discharge of arduous trusts) all those to have been unhappy who are commonly styled the unfortunate. The mind suits itself to the part it is destined to act; and, when great and worthy objects are before it, exults in those moments of hazard and alarm, which, even while they threaten life and freedom, leave us in possession of everything that constitutes the glory and the perfection of our nature.

> "In secret streams which no loud storms annoy,
> Glides the smooth current of domestic joy:—
> The lifted axe, the agonizing wheel,
> Luke's iron crown, and Damien's bed of steel,
> To men remote from power but rarely known,
> Leave reason, faith, and conscience all our own."*

The observations already made are, I hope, sufficient to obviate some of the strongest prejudices which are commonly

* [The concluding lines of Goldsmith's *Traveller;* in part contributed by Johnson. These noble verses are worth correcting.—Not Luke, but his brother George was tortured by the red-hot throne, crown, and sceptre; Luke being only constrained to drink a goblet of his brother's blood. Neither

entertained on this subject; but the argument may be pushed much farther than I have yet done. I have spoken of the multitudes who pass through life in obscurity, as if their characters were merely inoffensive, and entitled them only to a negative praise; whereas it may be reasonably doubted if it is not among them that the highest attainments of humanity have been made. In one half of our species, not destined by nature to come forward like our sex on the great theatre of human affairs, how meritorious in most instances, how exalted in many instances, is the general tenor of their conduct! And when unusual combinations of circumstances have forced them into situations of difficulty and danger, what splendid examples of constancy and magnanimity have they left behind them! Every person, too, who has turned his attention at all to the manners of the lower orders, and who has studied with candour what Gray finely calls "*The short and simple annals of the poor*," must have met, among the many faults that may be fairly charged on their education and their circumstances, with numberless instances of integrity and of humanity which would have added lustre to the highest stations. There is not a more interesting circumstance mentioned in any biographical detail than the emotion which *Moliere* is said to have discovered when a common beggar, to whom he had hastily given a piece of gold instead of a small copper coin, returned and informed him of his mistake. "Où la vertu va-t-elle se nicher!" An exclamation which, as *Bailly* observes, "throws a stronger light on the character of the man who uttered it than all the anecdotes which have been collected of his wit and pleasantry."

It is not, however, by *facts* alone that our conclusions on this subject ought to be limited; for it is one of the amiable weaknesses often attendant upon worth (if it is indeed a weakness) to shun the observation of the world, and (as Pope alleges of

was their family name *Zack* or *Zeck*, as Goldsmith's biographer and his recent editors assert, but *Dosa*. They were indeed *Zeck*lers; that is, natives of a certain district in Transylvania; hence the additional mistake. The event alluded to occurred at the end of the Hungarian insurrection of 1514.—*Ed.*]

his friend Mr. Allen) to feel "*an awkward shame*" when detected in acts of beneficence.

. . . . "*Do good by stealth, and blush to find it fame.*"

It is even proper and prudent in many instances to draw a veil over our *moral sensibilities*, were it for no other reason than this, that an assumed expression of them has been so often made subservient to the purposes of hypocrisy and affectation.

These imperfect hints, if they are allowed to be well founded, go far to justify a very pleasing idea of Mr. Addison's, that "there are probably greater men who lie concealed among the species than those who come out and draw on themselves the eyes and admiration of mankind."—"If we suppose," says he, "there are spirits or angels who look into the ways of men, how different are the notions which they entertain of us from those which we are apt to form of one another! We are dazzled with the splendour of titles; the ostentation of learning; the noise of victories. They, on the contrary, see the philosopher in the cottage, who possesses his soul in patience and thankfulness, under the pressure of what little souls call poverty and distress. They do not look for great men at the head of armies, or among the pomp of a court; but often find them out in shades and solitudes, in the private walks and bye-paths of life. The evening walk of a wise man is more illustrious in their sight than the march of a general at the head of a victorious army. A contemplation of God's works; a voluntary act of justice to our own detriment; tears that are shed in silence for the miseries of others; a private desire or resentment broken or subdued: In short, an unfeigned exercise of humility or any other virtue, are such actions as are glorious in their sight, and denominate men great and respectable. The most famous among us are often looked upon with pity, with contempt, or with indignation, while those who are most obscure among their own species are regarded with love, with approbation, and esteem."[1]

[1] Descartes seems to have been strongly impressed with these sentiments when he chose for his motto:—"*Qui bene latuit, bene vixit.*" Such also is the evident import of the line in Horace:—

Nec vixit male, qui natus moriensque fefellit."
Horace, Epist. I. [xvii. 10.]

In the foregoing reasonings I have not thought it necessary to enter into any nice metaphysical disquisitions with respect to the circumstances on which the moral merit and demerit of actions depend, but have expressed myself agreeably to the common language on the subject, though far from being strictly accurate. A distinction which I shall afterwards have occasion to illustrate between *absolute* and *relative* rectitude would enable me to *explain away* a much greater proportion of the apparent wickedness of our species. As I am unwilling, however, to anticipate at present that very important speculation, I shall confine myself to a simple statement of the distinction, and to a few very slight hints with respect to its application to the question before us.

An action is said to be absolutely right when it is in every respect suitable to the circumstances in which the agent is placed; or, in other words, when it is such as, with perfectly good intentions, under the guidance of an enlightened and well informed understanding, he would have performed.

An action is said to be relatively right when the intentions of the agent are sincerely good, whether his conduct be suitable to his circumstances or not.

According to these definitions, it is evident that an action may be *right* in one sense and *wrong* in another; and it is no less evident, that it is the *relative* rectitude alone of an action which determines the moral desert of the agent in the sight of God and of his own conscience.

In computing, therefore, the moral demerit of mankind from their external actions, a large allowance ought to be made for those circumstances which may occasion deviations in their conduct from absolute rectitude without affecting the sincerity of their good intentions. In particular, a large allowance ought to be made for erroneous speculative opinions;—for false conceptions of facts;—for prejudices inspired by the influence of prevailing manners;—and for habits contracted insensibly in early infancy.

On each of these heads much might be offered; but the variety of matter which crowds upon me renders it necessary

to make a selection of such articles as are connected with the general argument. *One* circumstance alone now mentioned, *false conceptions of facts*, is sufficient to account for most of the cruel enmities in the world, both between nations and individuals. How often do we see this hostile disposition existing between two men, both of whom every impartial judge knows to be actuated by the worthiest motives, and of whom, perhaps, neither would be much to blame for his conduct, if his adversary were such a man as he takes him to be! In such instances we may have just cause to regret too great an irritability of temper, too suspicious and jealous a disposition; or perhaps to wish that the parties possessed more good sense, and less narrow and prejudiced minds. But the more closely we study the circumstances of the case, we shall be the more disposed to acquit them of that intentional injustice, and of that pure vindictive malice which they impute to each other, and which the world is likely, on a superficial view of the subject, to impute to both. If mankind were universally possessed of more enlarged and just understandings, everything else in their characters remaining as at present, little would be wanting to complete the order and harmony of society. And hence some have been led to imagine that vice and folly are only different names for the same thing. This seems to have been the opinion of Plato, according to whom "virtue may be considered as a sort of science, and no man can see clearly and demonstratively what is right and what is wrong, and not act accordingly."* But this, as will afterwards appear, was an excess of refinement; and it was with good reason Aristotle taught in opposition to it, "That no conviction of the understanding is capable of getting the better of inveterate habits, and that good morals arise not from knowledge but from action."†

I cannot leave this head without again remarking the great importance, in forming our estimates of human character, of making suitable allowances for prejudices inspired by the in-

* [See in *Euthydemo*, in *Lachete*, in *Menone*, in *Protagora*, &c. Compare also the spurious Dialogue, *De Virtute, an doceri possit.*]

† [*Ethica Nicom.* Lib. II. capp. i.-v.; Lib. III. capp. i.-v.; ed. Wilk.]

fluence of prevailing manners, and for habits contracted in early infancy. It was justly remarked by Turgot, that bad laws are the great source of bad morals: and "hence it was," says one of his biographers, "that, with an exemplary purity, and even severity in his own manners, he was so candid and indulgent in his opinions of others. Whatever their conduct might be, if it indicated no meanness, no falseness, no insensibility, no contempt for the rights of mankind, no tyranny, he was ever ready to pardon it; for he saw in it the imperfections of social institutions, not the faults of the individuals; and when these weaknesses or vices were joined with estimable qualities, or with real virtues, he respected the virtues as the work of the man himself, and regarded his failings with the pity due to misfortunes."

So much with respect to the balance of *moral* evil and *moral* good in human life.

2. [In the *second* place,] With respect to the balance of *physical* evil and *physical* good, the argument is still clearer, or rather it is so clear as to preclude the possibility of any discussion, provided only it be acknowledged that the general laws of nature are beneficent in their tendency, and that the inconveniences arising from them are only occasional. And surely upon this point there can be no hesitation. Indeed, the *fact* is so indisputable and so obvious, that we may venture to rest the whole question at issue upon the impossibility of pointing out any one general physical law that could have been more wisely or beneficently ordered.

Among the occasional evils, too, that result from the physical laws by which this world is governed, no inconsiderable part may be traced to the obstacles which human institutions oppose to the order of things recommended by nature. How chimerical soever the speculations of philosophers concerning the perfection of legislation may be, they are useful at least in illustrating the wisdom and goodness of the Divine government. For this purpose I have often thought that it might form both an agreeable and instructive employment to follow out the supposition to its remote consequences, by considering the changes that in process of time would take place in the physical and in

the moral condition of mankind, in consequence of the gradual influence of such institutions, as it is easy for a philosopher to conceive in theory. But in these disquisitions I cannot indulge myself at present.

It is of more consequence for us to remark a most beautiful and merciful remedy, (at least in part,) which is provided for the occasional evils that in every state of society must be inseparable, in a greater or less degree, from a world like ours, governed by general laws, and inhabited by free agents. The remedy I allude to is the constitution of the human mind with respect to *habits*. So great is their influence, that there is hardly any situation to which the wishes of an individual may not be reconciled; nay, where he will not find himself in time more comfortable than in those which are looked up to with envy by the bulk of mankind.

In judging of the fortunes of those who are placed in situations very different from our own, due allowances are seldom made for the effects of this principle. We conceive ourselves to be placed in the circumstances they occupy, and judge of their happiness or misery by what we should experience if we were to change our condition without any change in our habits. How dreadful, for example, in our apprehension, the lot of those who, to gratify the luxurious wants of their superiors, drag out a miserable existence (and for a scanty recompense) in the bowels of the earth! And accordingly, there is none of the evils connected with polished life which Mr. Burke has painted with greater force of eloquence in his ironical *Vindication of Natural Society*. Even here, however, the evil (which is unquestionably a real one, for it implies a vitiated taste with respect to our purest and most genuine pleasures) is probably not a little magnified by our disposition to measure it by our own feelings. "I have been assured," says Dr. Beattie, "by a man of humanity and observation, the superintendent of an English colliery, that his people would rather work in their pits, three hundred feet under ground, than labour in a field of hay in the finest sunshine." The same fact, or at least facts perfectly analogous, have been often stated to myself by per-

sons who were able to speak on the subject, from instances which fell under their own daily notice.

It is still more pleasing to remark the versatility of human nature, as it is exemplified among the inhabitants of the different regions of the globe; accommodating itself everywhere (and apparently with the same facility) to the physical circumstances of the climate where the lot of the individual has been cast.

"Consider," says Seneca, "all those nations with whom the tranquillity of our empire terminates; I speak of the *Germans* and of the other wandering hordes in the neighbourhood of the Danube, oppressed with a perpetual winter, and with a lowering sky; their scanty subsistence depends on a barren soil; their shelter from rain is furnished by thatch and leaves; they pass over their fens on the ice which gives them solidity; they employ as articles of food the wild beasts which they have seized in the chase. Do these men appear to you to be unhappy? No. *Habit* [Consuetudo] becomes to them a second *nature*, and what was at first imposed by necessity is now converted into a source of pleasure. The truth is, that the same external circumstances which you picture to yourself as the extreme of wretchedness, constitutes to numerous tribes of your fellow-creatures the whole circle of enjoyment which human life affords them. 'Hoc tibi calamitas videtur? Tot gentium vita est.'"[1]

"The Laplander," says a writer in the *Amœnitates Academicæ*,* "is continually occupied with the care of his flock by night and day, not only in the summer, but also in every season of the year, and is obliged to wander up and down in his immense woods during all the extremities of a polar winter. The miserable herdsman must sink under such revolutions of distress, did not nature balance them with comforts able to support him under them. During his long night, the frosty brilliancy of the stars, the reflection of the snow, and the aurora borealis, with a thousand diversities of figure and radiation,

[1] *De Providentia*, [cap. iv.; Compare also *De Tranquillitate*, cap. x.]

* [Of Linnæus.]

supply the absence of the sun; his clothes, gloves, and shoes are furnished him by the hide of the rein-deer; and the two latter being stuffed with the *Carex vesicaria* are a sufficient protection against the utmost extremity of the cold. With his dog and pipe of tobacco, his only luxury, he lives as contented and happy as the Tityrus of Virgil in the fine climate and voluptuous shades of Naples. With such ductility does nature yield to early habits."

I have quoted this passage, not only on account of the example it furnishes of the accommodating powers of the human frame, but as an illustration of the provision which nature often makes, in collateral physical circumstances, against the partial inconveniences resulting from her own general arrangements.

Nor is it only in infancy that the mind is susceptible of these habits. Numberless instances might be quoted from the history of our species to show with what facility individuals, who had been accustomed to all the luxuries of life, have reconciled themselves to labour, hardship, and poverty, and even in some cases to a complete privation of all the comforts connected with civilized society.

Illustrations of these remarks may be collected by every one within the circle of his own experience; and whoever takes the trouble to verify them in particular instances will find ample ground to admire the kind palliative which is thus provided against the evils of our present uncertain state, as well as the most satisfactory evidence that our common estimates of the happiness of life fall short greatly of the truth.

Having dwelt so long on the beneficent tendency of those laws which regulate the more essential interests of mankind, I must content myself with barely mentioning, before leaving this subject, the rich provision made for our enjoyment in the pleasures of the understanding, of the imagination, and of the heart. How delightful are the pursuits of science, how various, how inexhaustible! How pure, how tranquil are the pleasures afforded by the fine arts! How enlivening the charms of social intercourse! How exquisite the endearments of affec-

tion! How sublime the raptures of devotion! The accommodation of our *sensitive* powers to the scene we occupy is still more wonderful: inasmuch as over and above the care which is taken for the preservation of our animal being, and the means provided for our intellectual and moral improvement, there appears to be a positive adaptation of our frame to the earth we inhabit; an adaptation our Maker could destine for no other end but to multiply the sources of our enjoyment. Surely he might have contrived to enlighten the earth without displaying to our view the glories of the firmament. The day and the night might have regularly succeeded each other without our once having beheld the splendour of a morning sun, or the glow of an evening sky. The spring might have ministered to the fertility of summer and of autumn without scattering over the earth a profusion of flowers and blossoms, without refreshing the eye with the soft verdure of the fields, or filling the woods with joy and melody.

> . . . . "Nor content
> With every food of life to nourish man,
> Thou mad'st all nature beauty to His eye
> And music to His ear!"

"The whole frame of the universe," says Epictetus, "is full of the goodness of God; and to be convinced of this important truth nothing more is necessary than an attentive mind and a grateful heart."*

It is however true, as Dr. Paley has remarked in by far the finest passage of his work on Moral Philosophy, "That the contemplation of *universal* nature rather *bewilders* the mind than *affects* it. There is always a *bright spot* in the prospect upon which the eye rests; a single example, perhaps, by which each man finds himself more *convinced* than by all others put together. *I* seem, for my own part, to see the benevolence of the Deity more clearly in the pleasures of very young children than in anything in the world. The pleasures of grown persons may be reckoned partly of their own procuring, especially if there has been any industry, or contrivance, or pursuit to

* [Arriani *Dissert. Epict.*]

come at them, or if they are founded, like music and painting, upon any qualification of their own acquiring. But the pleasures of a healthy infant are so manifestly provided for by *another*, and the benevolence of the provision is so unquestionable, that every child I see at its sport affords to my mind a kind of sensible evidence of the finger of God, and of the disposition which directs it.

"But the example which strikes each man most strongly is the true example for him, and hardly two minds hit upon the same;—which shows the abundance of such examples about us."*

[SECT. II.]—OF THE EVIDENCES OF THE MORAL GOVERNMENT OF THE DEITY.

From the observations made on the foregoing subject it sufficiently appears that the constitution of the universe, and the general laws which regulate the course of human affairs, are wisely and beneficently contrived for the happiness of man; that the sufferings which occur in human life furnish no direct evidence of ill intention in the Author and Governor of the world; and that our own moral constitution (which we cannot help conceiving to have some conformity to the moral attributes of God) affords the strongest presumption that these sufferings are all subservient to beneficial purposes. But although *benevolence* and *goodness* be plainly an attribute of the Deity, it is not the *only* character in which he manifests himself to us in the course of his providence. There is another character perfectly consistent with this, and perhaps in fact a consequence of it, but which involves a different and very important consideration;—that of the *righteous* Governor of the universe, whose object is not merely to communicate happiness, but to reward virtue and to punish vice.

From the order of the universe, and the combination of means we everywhere see employed to accomplish particular ends, we formerly concluded that it is the work of an intelligent mind. Now the same mode of reasoning leads us with equal

* [*Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy*, Book II. chap. v.]

certainty to draw other inferences concerning the Divine Nature and attributes. It was observed, [p. 133,] in the course of our argument with respect to the goodness of God, "that all which we enjoy, and a great part of what we suffer, is put in our own power."—"That pleasures and pains are the consequences of our actions; and that we are endued with capacities for foreseeing these consequences." That one course of conduct leads to happiness and another to misery is a *fact* confirmed by the general course of events; and as the general course of events means to those who acknowledge the existence of God the same thing with the general plan of Divine Providence, this fact proves that God exercises a *government* over the world by means of rewards and punishments; a government analogous to that which a master exercises over his servants, or a civil magistrate over his subjects. Nor is this all. From an examination of the course of human affairs it appears clearly, that, although happiness and misery are by no means distributed with an exact regard to the merits of individuals, yet they are so to so great a degree as may convince us that the *leading* object of Providence is to reward the good and to punish the evil. In other words, it appears that God exercises over the world not merely a government but a *moral* government; not so perfect indeed as our moral constitution would lead us to desire, but sufficiently discernible in its *general tendency* to every attentive and well-disposed mind.

According to some philosophers and divines the sole ultimate end of the creation was the communication of happiness, and the sole moral attribute of the Deity is *pure benevolence.* It is not impossible that this may be the case; nay, there are various considerations which make this not an improbable opinion. On this supposition we must conclude that the Deity bestowed on us our moral constitution as a *mean* towards a farther *end,*—the happiness of our own nature;—and distributed rewards and punishments only to secure this end more effectually. It is not impossible that there may be beings in the creation to whom he manifests himself alone under the character of benevolence. But all this is mere speculative supposition. The rules of our

conduct are not to be derived from *possibilities* but from *facts;* and all that the fact authorizes us in this instance to conclude is, that God exercises over us a moral government by rewards and punishments, analogous to that which the civil magistrate establishes for preserving the order of society.[1]

Upon this subject two methods of arguing have been employed, which tend wonderfully to illustrate and confirm each other: the one founded on an examination of our own moral constitution; and the other on an examination of the ordinary course of Providence in the administration of human affairs. The former should, I think, precede the latter, in order to fortify the mind against those sceptical suspicions which the irregularities and disorders of the present state of things are apt to obtrude on a gloomy imagination. I have, accordingly, already hinted in part at this argument; but, for the sake of connexion, it may be proper in this place to recapitulate the following particulars.

In considering the evidences of benevolent design in the universe, it was before remarked, [p. 121,] that, as our first ideas of the moral attributes of God are derived from our own moral perceptions, so it is from the consideration of these that the strongest proofs of his attributes arise.

It was also observed, [Ibid.] that the distinction between right and wrong is apprehended by the mind to be eternal and immutable, no less than the distinction between mathematical truth and falsehood; and that, of course, to argue from our own

[1] "The annexing pleasure to some actions, and pain to others, in our power to do or to forbear, and giving notice of this appointment beforehand to those whom it concerns, is the proper formal notion of government. Whether the pleasure or pain which thus follows upon our behaviour be owing to the Author of Nature acting upon us every moment which we feel it, or to his having at once contrived and executed his own part in the plan of the world, makes no alteration as to the matter before us. For if civil magistrates could make the sanction of their laws take place without interposing at all after they had passed them; without a trial and the formality of an executioner: if they were able to make their laws execute themselves, or every offender to execute them upon himself, we should be just in the same sense under their government then as we are now, but in a much higher degree and more perfect manner."—Butler's *Analogy*, [Part I.] chap. ii.

moral judgments to the administration of the Deity, cannot be justly censured as a rash extension to the Divine Nature of suggestions resulting from the arbitrary constitution of our own minds.

The power we have of conceiving this distinction is one of the most remarkable of those which raise us above the brutes; and the sense of obligation which it involves possesses a distinguished pre-eminence over all our other principles of action. To act in conformity to our sense of rectitude is plainly the highest excellence which our nature is capable of attaining; nor can we avoid extending the same rule of estimation to all intelligent beings whatever.

Besides these conclusions with respect to the Divine attributes, (which seem to be implied in our very perception of moral distinctions,) there are others perfectly agreeable to them, which continually force themselves on the mind in the exercise of our moral judgments, both with respect to our own conduct and that of other men. The reverence which we feel due to the admonitions of conscience,—the sense of merit and demerit which accompanies our good and bad actions,—the warm interest we take in the fortunes of the virtuous,—the indignation we feel at the occasional triumphs of successful villany,—all imply a secret conviction of the moral administration of the universe.

An examination, however, of the ordinary course of human affairs adds greatly to the force of these considerations,[1] and

[1] "From the natural course of things, vicious actions are to a great degree actually punished as mischievous to society. And beside the penalties actually inflicted in such cases, the fears and apprehensions of it, in case of a discovery, operate frequently as no inconsiderable punishment on those who escape the vengeance of human laws. That those vices which are destructive of society should be punished by the magistrate, arises from the very existence of society. And as the political union is the necessary result of the nature of man, the penalties by which it restrains crimes may be considered as a part of the order of Providence, though acting by the instrumentality of man. Nor is it a valid objection to this reasoning that good actions, and such as are really beneficial to the public, are sometimes punished, as in the case of unjust persecution; and that vicious actions are frequently rewarded; for, in the first place, when this occurs it is matter of accident, and does not arise necessarily from the established order of things, as the penalties annexed to certain vices result necessarily from the constitution of society; and, secondly, when good

furnishes a proof from the fact, that, notwithstanding the seemingly promiscuous distribution of happiness and misery in this life, the reward of virtue and the punishment of vice are the great objects of all the general laws by which the world is governed. The disorders in the meantime which, in such a world as ours, cannot fail to arise in particular instances, when they are compared with our natural sense of good and of ill desert, afford a presumption, that in a future state the moral government which we see begun here will be carried into complete execution.

actions are punished, and bad ones rewarded, it is owing to some accidental misconception of their tendency, the former being supposed erroneously to be hurtful, and the latter beneficial to the public. The general proposition, therefore, holds, without anything that can be opposed to it on the other hand, that the punishment of certain vices results necessarily from the circumstances in which Providence has placed mankind.

"In the natural course of things, virtue *as such* is actually rewarded, and vice *as such* punished. Besides the agreeable and disagreeable effects of virtue and vice on men's own minds, the course of the world turns in some measure upon the approbation and disapprobation of them *as such* in others. The sense of well and ill doing, the presages of conscience, the love of good characters and dislike of bad ones, honour, shame, resentment, gratitude,—all these, considered in themselves and in their effects, afford manifest real instances of virtue *as such* naturally favoured, and of vice *as such* discountenanced, more or less, in the daily course of human life. That God has given us a moral constitution may be urged most justly as a proof of our being under his moral government. But that he has placed us in a condition which gives this nature scope to operate, and in which it does unavoidably operate, by influencing mankind so to act as to favour and reward virtue and punish vice; this is not the same, but an additional proof of his moral government, for it is an instance of it. The first is a proof that he will finally favour and support virtue effectually. The second is an example of his favouring and supporting it at present in some degree.

"Besides the actual *effects* of virtue and vice in this life, there is something very remarkable in their necessary *tendencies;* and in so far as these tendencies lie open to our observation, they afford a proof from the fact of the moral government under which we are placed. The actual consequences of virtue and of vice are, indeed, very conspicuous; but they bear little proportion to what they would produce if their *tendencies* were not restrained by accidental circumstances. Good and bad men, for example, would be much more rewarded and punished as such, were it not that justice is often artificially eluded, that characters are not known, and many who would thus favour virtue and discourage vice are hindered from doing so from accidental causes."

The foregoing note is little more than an abridgment of some observations of Butler's in his chapter "On the Moral Government of God."—See *Analogy*, p. 73, third edition. [Part I. chap. iii.]

CHAPTER IV.

OF A FUTURE STATE.

THE consideration of the Divine attributes naturally leads our thoughts to the future prospects of man, and to the sequel of that plan of moral government which we see plainly begun here, and which our own moral constitution, joined to our conclusions concerning the perfections of God, afford us the strongest intimations will be more completely unfolded in some subsequent stage of our being. The doctrine indeed of a future state seems to be in a great measure implied in every system of religious belief; for why were we rendered capable of elevating our thoughts to the Deity, if all our hopes are to terminate here? Or why were we furnished with powers which range through the infinity of space and time, if our lot is to be the same with that of the beasts which perish? But although the doctrine of a future state be implied in every scheme of religion, the truths of religion are not necessarily implied in the doctrine of a future state. Even absolute Atheism does not destroy all the arguments for the Immortality of the soul. Whether it be owing to an overruling intelligence or not, it is a *fact* which no man can deny, that there are general laws which regulate the course of human affairs, and that even in this world we see manifest indications of a connexion between Virtue and Happiness. Why may not *necessity* continue that existence it at first gave birth to; and why may not the connexion between virtue and happiness subsist for ever?

SECT. I.—OF THE ARGUMENT FOR A FUTURE STATE DERIVED FROM THE NATURE OF MIND.

In collecting the various presumptions which the light of nature affords for a future state, too much stress has commonly been laid on the Soul's Immateriality.[1] After having proved, or attempted to prove, that it has no quality in common with Matter; in particular, that it is not extended or divisible, the advocates for this opinion have concluded, with all the confidence of demonstration, that what is not compounded nor made up of parts cannot be dissolved, and, therefore, that the human soul is essentially and necessarily immortal. "Et cum simplex natura animi esset, neque haberet in se quidquam admistum dispar sui, atque dissimile, non posse eum dividi; quod si non possit, non posse interire."[2]

But this argument, I am afraid, supposing it were logical, proves too much; for it concludes as strongly against the possibility of the soul's being *created* as *dissolved;* and, accordingly, we find that almost all the ancient philosophers who believed in a future state maintained also the doctrine of the soul's pre-existence. Nay, some of them seem to have considered the latter point as still better established than the former. In the *Phædon* of Plato, in which Socrates is introduced as stating to his friends immediately before his execution, the proofs of a future state, Cebes, who is one of the speakers in the dialogue, admits that he has been successful in establishing the doctrine of the soul's pre-existence, but insists on farther proofs of the possibility of its surviving the body.

When we consider, however, with attention the argument

[1] On this point I quite agree with Locke. "All the great ends of morality and religion are well enough secured without philosophical proof of the *soul's immateriality;* since it is evident, that He who made us at the beginning to subsist here, sensible intelligent beings, and for several years continued us in such a state, can restore us to the like state of sensibility in another world, and make us capable there to receive the retribution he has designed to men, according to their doings in this life," &c. &c. See the Chapter of his Essay on the Extent of Human Knowledge. —Locke's *Works*, Vol. II. p. 332. [*Essay*, Book IV. chap. iii. § 6.]

[2] Cicero, *De Senectute*, c. xxi.

from the Soul's Immateriality in favour of its Immortality, it appears to be by no means conclusive; for although we have the strongest evidence (as I shall afterwards shew) that there is a thinking and sentient principle within us essentially distinct from matter, yet we have no direct evidence from the fact, of the possibility of this principle exercising its various faculties and powers in a separate state from the body. On the contrary, the union between the two, while it subsists, is evidently of the most intimate nature. We have reason to believe that, in the exercise of all the Intellectual powers, the soul *acts* somehow or other on the body; for we find that when we have long been exerting any particular faculty, we are conscious of fatigue, and are relieved by giving the mind some other species of employment. We know, too, from what happens in consequence of intoxication, madness, and other diseases, that a certain condition of the body is necessary to the intellectual operations: And the same thing appears from the gradual decay of the faculties as we approach to old age. This last fact is indeed not universal. We meet with some old men who retain their faculties unimpaired to the last; and others cut off in the vigour of life, who have displayed the usual force of their understandings under the pressure of some disease which was in a few moments to terminate their existence. Bnt surely the more common fact is, that the body and mind seem to decay together; and the few exceptions that occur only prove that there are some diseases fatal to life which do not injure those parts of the body with which the intellectual operations are more immediately connected.

I would not be understood by these observations to give the smallest countenance to the scheme of Materialism; a scheme which is not only dangerous, but which I have shown, in the *Philosophy of the Human Mind*, to be absurd and incomprehensible.* Indeed it is self-evident, that, as our notions of body and mind are merely relative, as we know the one only by its sensible qualities, and the other by the operations of which we are conscious; to say of mind that it is not material, is to

* [Vol. I. Introduction, Part i.; *Works*, Vol. II. pp. 47, 48.]

affirm a proposition, the truth of which is involved in the only conceptions of matter and mind that we are capable of forming.

The doubts that have been suggested with respect to the essential distinction between Matter and Mind derive all their plausibility from the habits of inattention we acquire in early infancy to our mental operations. It was plainly the intention of nature that our thoughts should be habitually directed to things external; and accordingly the bulk of mankind are not only disposed to overlook the mental phenomena, but are incapable of that degree of reflection which is necessary for their examination. Hence it is, that, when we begin to study our own internal constitution, we find the facts it presents to us so very intimately associated in our conceptions with the qualities of matter, that it is impossible for us to draw distinctly and steadily the line between them; and that when mind and matter are concerned in the same event, mind is either entirely overlooked, or is regarded only as an accessory to matter, and as dependent upon it for its existence. The tendency which all men have to refer the sensation of *colour* to the objects by which it is excited, may serve to illustrate the manner in which the qualities of mind and body come to be blended in our apprehensions. We may add, as a farther illustration of the same thing, the reference which, in the case of physical events, we naturally make to matter, of *Power*, or *Force*, or *Energy*, which is an attribute of mind, and can exist in mind only. The same observation might be exemplified in numberless other instances, of which I shall at present mention only one,—the confusion between the terms *Sensation* and *Perception* which has produced the ideal theory. In general, the bulk of mankind are so engrossed with external objects, that they overlook entirely their own mental operations, and even lose the capacity of attending to them; insomuch that the mind is compared by Locke to the eye, which sees every object around us, but cannot see itself. This tendency of our nature is to be counteracted only by habits of reflection of which very few men are capable, and which, unless we are led, by natural curiosity or by accident, to

cultivate them in very early youth, are, I believe, perfectly unattainable. Such habits are, however, absolutely necessary to enable us to make any solid progress in the Philosophy of Mind, and to prevent us from being misled by the analogy of Matter in explaining the intellectual phenomena. In proportion, too, as they become familiar to us, they lead us insensibly, without any long process of reasoning, to draw the line between the operations of Mind and the qualities of Matter; and to perceive, that of all the truths we know the existence of mind is the most certain. Even the system of Berkeley, concerning the non-existence of matter, is far more conceivable than that matter is the *only* substance existing in the universe.

For the errors which the vulgar are apt to commit on these subjects, the habits of inattention already mentioned afford perhaps more than a sufficient apology. But it is painful to remark in philosophers of eminence, who seem to have, in a considerable degree, surmounted these habits, a disposition to conform themselves to the grossest apprehensions of the multitude, rather than give any countenance to the sublime and elevating doctrine of the immateriality of the soul. Thus Mr. Hume, who has so accurately stated in the case of the secondary qualities of matter, the absurdity of referring to body what can only exist in a sentient being, has yet not scrupled to speak of "*that little agitation of the brain which we call thought.*" Surely, if it be absurd to speak of Matter being *cold* or *hot*, *blue* or *green*, it is at least as great an absurdity to speak of Matter, *thinking*, *remembering*, or *reasoning*."*

If these remarks be well founded, the prejudices which give support to the scheme of Materialism are not likely to be cured by any metaphysical reasonings, how clear or conclusive soever, so long as the judgment continues to be warped by such obstinate associations as have just been mentioned. A habit of reflecting on the laws of thought, as they are to be collected from our own consciousness, together with a habit of resisting those illusions of the fancy which lead superficial inquirers to substitute analogies for facts, will gradually enable us to make

* [See *Dissertation; Works*, Vol. I. p. 137.]

the phenomena of Matter and those of Mind distinct objects of attention, and as soon as this happens, the absurdity of Materialism must appear intuitively obvious.

It affords, I think, some confirmation of these reasonings, that all the attempts which have been made to explain any of the operations of mind by the analogy of material phenomena, have involved their authors in absurdities and contradictions; and that it is only since the time when Descartes drew the line distinctly between these two objects of our knowledge[1] that any considerable progress in the Philosophy of Mind has been made. On the other hand, every step which has been gained in this study has undermined some of the prejudices from which Materialism derives its support. The old theory, for example, with respect to perception, was extremely favourable to the supposition of the soul's materiality. Philosophers apprehended that the qualities of external objects were perceived by means of images of these qualities, transmitted from the object to the mind through the medium of the senses, and that there was no idea in the understanding which was not originally conveyed to it by this channel. Thus the mind was conceived to receive all its ideas from without, and to be originally nothing more than a repository for receiving the images or *species* of surrounding objects; or, as the language of these philosophers seems at other times rather to imply, a tablet fitted to receive passively those impressions or stamps which are made on it by the various qualities of matter. These *images*, or these *impressions*, furnished the whole materials of its knowledge, which it might analyze or compound, but beyond which it could create nothing.

When, however, we lay aside theory, and attend to the fact,

[1] "Les *Méditations Métaphysiques* de Descartes parurent en 1641. C'étoit de tous ses ouvrages, celui qu'il estimoit le plus. Ce qui caractérise surtout cet ouvrage, c'est qu'il contient sa fameuse démonstration de Dieu, démonstration si répétée depuis, adoptée par les uns et rejetée par les autres; et *qu'il est le premier où la distinction de l'esprit et de la matière soit parfaitement développée:* Car avant Descartes on n'avoit encore bien approfondi les preuves philosophiques de la spiritualité de l'âme."—*Eloge de Descartes*, par M. Thomas, Note 20.

it appears, with unquestionable evidence, that our perception of external objects is obtained by the intervention of sensations, to which the qualities of these objects bear no more resemblance than the words of a language do to the objects they denote; and that the only difference which we are able to discover between the two cases is, that in the one the connexion between the sign and the thing signified is established by nature, and in the other by custom alone. By the constitution of our nature indeed, we are disposed in most instances to overlook the sign, and to attend to the thing signified; in consequence of which the qualities of matter engross our attention much more, and are much more familiar to us than the sensations of which we are conscious, and by the intervention of which our perceptions of these qualities are obtained. It is easy, however, to conceive that the mind might have been so formed as to possess all the sensations which belong to it in its present state, without having had any perception of the qualities of external objects. And it may be even affirmed that it might have arrived at the exercise of most of its intellectual faculties, without having had any notion of the existence of a material world.

For the illustration of this proposition I must refer to the *Philosophy of the Human Mind*;[1] and whoever considers it with attention, and reflects on the consequences to which it leads, will (if I am not much deceived) be fully sensible of the absurdity which the scheme of Materialism involves.

It is not, however, on an examination of the human intellect alone that I would rest the decision of this question. Besides the evidences for the existence of mind which our own consciousness affords, and those which are exhibited by other men and by the lower animals, there are many presented to us by every part of the material world. We are so constituted that every change we see in it suggests to us the notion of an Efficient Cause; and every combination of means conspiring to an end suggests to us the notion of Intelligence. And accordingly the various changes which take place in nature, and the order

[1] Vol. I. chap. i. sect. 4.—[*Works*, Vol. II. pp. 113-119. See also pp. 47, 48.]

and beauty of the universe, have in every age been regarded as the effects of power and wisdom; that is, of the operation of mind. In the material world, therefore, as well as in the case of animated nature, we are led to conceive body as a *passive* subject, and mind as the *moving* and governing agent. And it deserves attention, that in the former class of phenomena mind appears to move and arrange the parts of matter without being united with it, as in the case of animal life.

There are various circumstances which render it highly probable that the union between soul and body which takes place in our present state, so far from being essential to the exercise of our powers and faculties, was intended to limit the sphere of our information; and to prevent us from acquiring, in this early stage of our being, too clear a view of the constitution and government of the universe. Indeed, when we reflect on the difference between the operations of Mind and the qualities of Matter, it appears much more wonderful that they should be so intimately united as we find them actually to be, than to suppose that the former may exist in a conscious and intelligent state when separated from the latter.[1]

It may perhaps contribute somewhat to reconcile the imagination to this doctrine, when we consider that the substance of which the body is composed is perpetually changing, so that during the life of a man all the particles which go to the combination must have frequently undergone a complete renovation; and yet during all this time we retain a distinct consciousness of our personal identity. This fact is surely not a little favourable to the supposition of Mind being a principle essentially distinct from Matter, and capable of existing when its connexion with the body is dissolved. I do not say that it furnishes any logical argument on the subject distinct from that already stated; but in the present inquiry *arguments* are less necessary than *illustrations to aid our apprehensions*, in

[1] "Mihi quidem, naturam animi intuenti, multo difficilior occurrit cogitatio multoque obscurior, qualis animus in corpore sit, tamquam alienæ domui, quam qualis, cum exierit et in liberum cælum quasi domum suam, venerit."—*Tusc. Disp.* Lib. I. c. xxii.

combating those associations which in our early years lead us so to blend the qualities of body and mind, that we find it difficult ever after to make them separate objects of attention. An old English writer (Mr. John Smith of Cambridge) has placed the remark now hinted at in some new and striking points of view.

"If our souls were nothing else than a complex of fluid atoms, how should we be continually roving and sliding from ourselves, and soon forget what we once were? The *new matter* that would come in to fill up that vacuity which the *old* had made by its departure, would never know what the old were, nor what that should be that would succeed that. That new pilgrim and stranger-like soul would always be ignorant of what the other before it knew, and we should be wholly some other bulk of being than we were before, as Plotinus hath excellently observed, (Enn. IV. l. vii. c. 5.) It was a famous speech of wise Heraclitus,*—*Δὶς ἐς τὸν αὐτὸν ποταμὸν οὐκ ἂν ἐμβαίης*,—'*A man cannot enter twice into the same river;*' by which he was wont symbolically to express the constant flux of matter, which is the most unstable thing that may be. And if Epicurus in his Philosophy could free this heap of refined atoms, which it makes the soul to be, from this inconstant and flitting nature, and teach us how it could be *μόνιμον τι*, '*some stable and immutable thing,*' always resting entire while it is in the body; though we should thank him for such a goodly conceit as this is, yet we would make no doubt but it might as well be able to preserve itself from dissolution and dissipation *out* of this gross body as *in* it; seeing it is no more secured from the constant impulses of that more gross matter which is restlessly moving up and down *in* the body than it is *out* of it; and yet for all that, we should take the leave to ask Tully's question with his sober disdain, '*Quid, obsecro te, terrane tibi, aut hoc nebuloso et caliginoso cœno* [*cœlo*] *aut sata, aut concreta videtur tanta vis Memoriæ?*'† Such a jewel as this is too precious to be found in a dunghill. Mere matter could never thus stretch forth its feeble force and spread itself over all its own former

* [See Plato's *Cratylus*, § 41.]

† [*Tuscul. Disp.* Lib. I. c. xxv.]

pre-existences. We may as well suppose this dull and heavy earth we tread upon to know how long it hath dwelt in this part of the universe that now it doth, and what variety of creatures have in all past ages sprung forth from it, and all those occurrences and events which have all this time happened upon it."[1]

[1] *Select Discourses*, by John Smith of Cambridge, pp. 83, 84.

I have, in another work, made some remarks on the Argument against the Immateriality of the Soul which Priestley and others have founded on the common apprehensions of mankind, as manifested in their modes of speaking on the subject.—*Spiritus*, πνεῦμα, Ghost, &c.—*Philosophical Essays*, [Part I.] Essay v. ch. ii.—[*Works*, Vol. V. pp 163-166.]

The same metaphorical language, with respect to the nature of mind, occurs in one of the most classical didactic poems in our language.

"There is, they say, (and I believe there is,)
A spark within us of th' immortal *fire*,
That animates and moulds the grosser frame,
And when the body sinks escapes to Heaven,
Its native seat, and mixes with the gods.
Meanwhile this heavenly *particle* pervades
The mortal elements," &c. &c

[Armstrong's] *Art of Preserving Health*, [Book iv. 11.]

I have quoted these lines not on account of their own merit, but as an introduction to what appears to me to be a very exceptionable remark on them, by a writer for whose taste and critical judgment I entertain a high respect. "The theory," he observes, "of the union of a spiritual principle with the gross corporeal substance, is that which Armstrong adopts as the basis of his reasonings. He evidently confounds, however, (*as all writers on this system do*,) matter of great subtlety with what is not matter—or spirit."

See an ingenious and elegant Essay prefixed to the edition of Armstrong's *Poems*, published by J. Aikin, M.D.

If this observation had been confined to the passage of Armstrong here referred to, I should not have been disposed to object to it, as I think it completely justified by some expressions which occur in the next paragraph, particularly by what is there said of the various functions which are performed

"By subtle fluids pour'd through subtle tubes;"

Of some of which fluids we are afterwards told that they

"Are lost in thinking, and dissolve in air."

It is the parenthetical clause alone (distinguished by *italics*) which has led me to point out to my readers the foregoing criticism of Dr. Aikin's, and in this clause I must be allowed to say, that the greatest injustice is inadvertently done to many of our best philosophers, both ancient and modern.

To this note I shall only add the following query:—

Whence has arisen that disposition which materialists of every description have shown to subtilize, as far as was possible for the imagination to do so, the atoms which they conceived to produce by their organization the phenomena of thought?

"Quintessence d'atome, extrait de la lumière!"*

Might not a plausible argument against their opinion be deduced from this *acknowledged fact*, by employing a mode of reasoning somewhat analogous to the *method of exhaustions* among the Greek geometricians?

* [La Fontaine.]

What, then, shall we say of the effects of disease and old age on the mind? That they are convincing proofs of its intimate union with the body, and of the dependence of our intellectual operations at present on our corporeal organs, cannot be disputed. But they surely do not amount to a proof that the soul is necessarily extinguished when the body is dissolved. "Suppose a person," says Cicero, "to have been educated from his infancy in a chamber, where he enjoyed no opportunity of seeing external objects, but through a small chink in the window shutter, would he not be apt to consider this chink as essential to his vision, and would it not be difficult to persuade him that his prospects would be enlarged by demolishing the walls of his prison?" Admitting that this analogy is founded merely on fancy, yet, if it be granted that there is no absurdity in the supposition, it furnishes a sufficient answer to all the reasonings which have been stated against the possibility of the soul's separate existence from the consideration of its present union with the body.

In order to be completely sensible of the force of this observation, it is necessary to attend to the distinction between the Mind and its Organs of sense; or, in other words, between the percipient and his organs of perception; a distinction for the illustration of which I shall again avail myself of the language of Cicero. "Nos enim ne nunc quidem *oculis* cernimus ea quæ videmus; neque enim est ullus sensus in corpore, sed, ut non solum physici docent, verum etiam medici, qui ista aperta et patefacta viderunt, *vice* quasi quædam sunt ad oculos, ad aures, ad nares à sede animi perforatæ. Itaque sæpe aut cogitatione aut aliqua vi morbi impediti, apertis atque integris et oculis, et auribus, nec videmus, nec audimus: ut facile intelligi possit animum et videre et audire, non eas partes, quæ quasi fenestræ sunt animi: quibus tamen sentire nihil queat mens, nisi id agat et adsit. Quid, quod eadem mente res dissimillimas comprehendimus, ut colorem, saporem, calorem, odorem, sonum? quæ numquam quinque nuntiis animus cognosceret, nisi ad eum omnia referrentur, et is omnium judex solus esset. Atque ea profectò tum multo puriora et dilucidiora cernentur,

cum, quo natura fert, liber animus pervenerit. Nam nunc quidem, quamquam foramina illa, quæ patent ad animum a corpore, callidissimo artificio natura fabricata est, tamen terrenis concretisque corporibus sunt intersepta quodammodo: cum autem nihil erit præter animum, nulla res objecta impediet, quo minus percipiat, quale quidque sit."[1]

In support of the foregoing conclusions many strong arguments might be derived from an accurate examination and analysis of our ideas of matter and its qualities; but as such speculations would necessarily engage me in a discussion of some principles, about which philosophers are not as yet perfectly agreed, I shall content myself with barely hinting at my ideas on this subject, without aiming at a complete illustration of the argument.

It is well known to those who are at all acquainted with the present state of natural philosophy, that a new theory with respect to matter was proposed not many years ago by the late celebrated Father Boscovich. According to this theory we are taught that the quality of impenetrability, which commonly enters into our idea of matter, does not belong to it, and that the qualities of hardness and softness have always a reference to the force we employ in compressing bodies. As what is hard to an infant may be soft to a man, so what is hard when compared with human strength may be soft when compared with

[1] *Tuscul. Disputat.* Lib. I. c. xx.

The same idea which runs through this passage has been adopted and placed in some new lights by an old English poet, whose works are less known than they deserve to be, Sir John Davis, Attorney-General in Ireland, under the reign of Queen Elizabeth.—[*On the Immortality of the Soul*, Sect. xxxii.; following Plato, Aristotle, and the Pseudo-Epicharmus.—*Ed.*]

" So though the clouds eclipse the sun's fair light,
Yet from his face they do not take one beam;
So have our eyes their perfect power of sight
Even when they look into a troubled stream.
" Then these defects in sense's organs be,
Not in the soul, nor in her working might;
She cannot lose her perfect power to see,
Though mists and clouds do choke her window-light.
" These imperfections, then, we must impute
Not to the agent, but the instrument:
We must not blame Apollo but his lute,
If false accords from her false strings be sent.
" As a good harper stricken far in years,
Into whose cunning hands the gout doth fall,
All his old crotchets in his brain he bears,
But on his harp plays ill, or not at all.
* * * * *
" But if Apollo takes his gout away,
That he his nimble fingers may apply,
Apollo's self will envy at his play,
And all the world applaud his minstrelsy."

that of more powerful beings. When we have exerted all our force in attempting to compress a body, and find that we cannot diminish its volume any farther, the resistance it opposes to our efforts is not an absolute incompressibility, but an incompressibility relative to our strength. With a greater force it might be reduced within a volume still smaller, and with a force sufficiently great its volume might be made to vanish into nothing. Matter, therefore, it is concluded, is nothing but a power of resistance, and there is no such thing in nature as atoms perfectly hard and absolutely impenetrable.

With respect to this theory of Boscovich's I shall not venture to give any decided opinion. That it is attended with some difficulties must, I think, be granted by its most zealous advocates; but, on the other hand, it cannot be denied that he has been successful in establishing three propositions:—1*st*, That the supposition of impenetrable particles is liable to strong, if not to insurmountable objections. 2*dly*, That there are no facts which afford any direct evidence of it. And, 3*dly*, That there are some striking facts which favour the opposite hypothesis. In proof of the last proposition it is sufficient to appeal to those experiments which have led modern philosophers to conclude, that all bodies exert a repulsive power, extending to a certain distance from their surfaces, and that the common effects which are attributed to contact and collision are produced by this repulsion. We know that when a convex lens is laid on a plane glass, a very great compressive power may be employed without producing actual contact; and we also know, from some electrical phenomena, that the links of a metallic chain are not in contact with each other, even when the chain is stretched with very heavy weights. The same phenomena, therefore, *may be* produced by repulsion which we commonly ascribe to contact; and if so, why not attribute to the same cause *all* effects of the same nature? Accordingly, Boscovich denies the existence of impenetrable particles, and supposes matter to be composed of unextended elements (mere mathematical points) exerting powers of repulsion, so as to produce the same appearances which would take place on the common

supposition. On this doctrine with respect to matter, or at least on a doctrine extremely similar to it, Dr. Priestley has founded his reasonings against the immateriality of the soul; and it is from these premises he has attempted to show that the extinction of the sentient and thinking principle must necessarily result from the dissolution of the body.

But it appears to me, that, if Boscovich's theory be admitted, instead of establishing Materialism, it destroys completely the foundation of that system. It is evident that, according to Boscovich's idea, all that we know of the impenetrability of matter amounts to this, that there exist certain repulsive forces which counteract those compressing forces we ourselves exert. Now, if this is the case, we must ascribe these forces to something analogous to that of which we are conscious in ourselves. In other words, we must ascribe them to the *agency of mind;* for active force is an attribute of mind just as much as sensation or thought. Matter, therefore, is not a thing which has a separate and independent existence, but an *effect* which is continued by the constant agency of Divine Power.

I formerly endeavoured to show that, in the phenomena of gravitation, and in general in the changes which take place in the state of the material universe, the incessant agency of the Deity, or of some subordinate mind, is indispensably necessary to account for the effects.* And this seems now to be the opinion of all the best philosophers. But, according to Boscovich's theory, the constant agency of the Deity is carried much farther than any philosopher has hitherto apprehended; for it appears to be necessary to account for even the solidity or impenetrability of matter; that quality which is generally considered as constituting the very essence of matter, or at least to be inseparable from the idea of it. The ancient philosophers, even those of them who were theists, believed matter to be eternal as well as mind. Modern theists in general suppose matter to have been originally created by the Deity, but to have derived from him a separate and independent existence. But,

* [*Supra*, Vol. I. pp. 50, 51; Vol. II. p. 28, *seq.*; *infra*, Note A, Fifth Theory: also, *Philosophy of the Human Mind*, Vol. II. chap. iv. sect. 1. p. 231, *seq.*]

according to Boscovich's theory, the *existence* of matter is a constant effect of Divine Power; and, if this power were a moment withheld, the whole material universe would vanish into nothing. So far, therefore, from leading to Materialism, (in the common sense of that word,) Boscovich's theory, if accurately conceived and followed out to its necessary consequences, represents mind as the only independent existence we know, and matter as a mere *effect* dependent on its operation.

What, then, shall we suppose happens at death? Our connexion with that system of appearances called the material world plainly ceases; but surely no presumption arises from this against the permanent existence of our minds. On the contrary, the presumption is strongly in favour of their permanent existence, and that death only lifts up the veil which conceals from our mortal eyes the invisible world. Death does not extinguish mind, and leave the material world existing as before. On the contrary, death annihilates the material universe to our senses, and prepares our minds for some new and unknown state of being.[1] The philosophers who believed matter to be uncreated and eternal, might be pardoned for sometimes running into the absurdity of supposing that it is the only existence in nature, and that the phenomena of which we are conscious result from bodily organization. But *first* to maintain that matter is merely a system of forces, and *then* to conclude that there is no such thing as mind, is such a tissue of inconsistency and contradiction, or rather such a pitiful juggle upon words, as is scarcely to be paralleled in the history of philosophy.

I have already declined giving any opinion for or against Boscovich's theory, and shall only remark at present, as a circumstance that furnishes a most pleasing field of speculation to the human mind, that, on questions of so interesting a nature as those which relate to the existence of a Deity and a future

[1] This, as far as I am able to conjecture from my recollection of his conversation, was the opinion of my late amiable and excellent friend, Dr. James Hutton,—so ingenious and original in his writings as a geologist and natural philosopher, but often so dark and even incomprehensible as a metaphysician. It is well known that Dr. Hutton had adopted a theory with respect to matter approaching very nearly to those of Boscovich and Priestley.

state, the kind Author of our being has not left our belief to depend on the precarious issue of philosophical controversies; for whatever theory we adopt, whether right or wrong, we are unavoidably led to the same conclusions; and frequently those very hypotheses that have been advanced to unhinge the common opinions of mankind, have furnished new arguments in support of the principles they were intended to subvert.

After what has been already said, it is scarcely necessary for me to add, that the scope of the foregoing observations is to establish the probability, not only of the future existence of the soul, but of its conscious identity and individuality. Indeed, unless this be granted, the question about the distinct natures of mind and of body, and the possibility of the former surviving the dissolution of the latter, seems to me of no consequence whatever.

It is, however, not a little extraordinary, that a considerable number of philosophers, after admitting the distinction between mind and matter, have yet supposed the soul to be a *ray* or an *emanation* from the Deity, which at the dissolution of the body will be again absorbed into the great source from which it proceeded. This seems to have been the opinion of many of the ancient Stoics; and a similar idea has been adopted by some philosophers in modern times, who have compared the soul, when joined to the body, to a small portion of the sea inclosed in a vial; and when separated from it, to the same water, confounded and intermixed, by the breaking of the vial which contained it, with the ocean, from whence it was at first taken.

But this doctrine, though supported by great names, is not more pernicious in its tendency than it is absurd and unintelligible. The distinct consciousness we retain of our personal identity, under all the various changes which the body suffers during our progress through life, is the most important fact in the history of the human mind, and it is that which affords the strongest of all presages of its future destination. To speak of different minds being blended together and lost in one general mass of being, is to employ a form of words to which it is absolutely impossible to annex a meaning, and is one of the many absurdities into which ingenious men have been led, by

indulging their fancy in groundless analogies between intellectual and material phenomena. It is, in truth, a language which is infinitely more unphilosophical than that employed by the materialists, who suppose thinking to result from bodily organization, and the whole man to perish at the moment of death. In their practical tendency, I can see no difference between the two opinions.

I have now stated all that I think it necessary for me to offer in illustration of the argument for a future state derived from the nature of mind,—an argument which, although it seems to me to be highly favourable to our future hopes, I have avoided to urge with the confidence of demonstrative certainty. In entering upon the subject, I observed that those writers who, from the immateriality of the soul, conclude that it is physically and necessarily immortal, have pushed the conclusion too far; and that the proper use of the speculation concerning the nature of mind, is not to establish the *truth* of the point in question, but to refute the objections which have been urged against the possibility of the proposition. Although our knowledge of the nature of mind may not be sufficient to afford us any positive argument on the subject, yet, if it can be shown that the dissolution of the body does not necessarily infer the extinction of the soul; and still more, if it can be shown that the presumption is in favour of the contrary supposition, the moral proofs of a future retribution will meet with a more easy reception, when the doctrine is freed from the metaphysical difficulties which it has been apprehended to involve. It is in this moderate form that the argument from the light of nature is stated by Butler; and the considerations he mentions prove fully, not only that no presumption against a future state can be collected from the dissolution of the body, but that the contrary supposition is more agreeable to the general analogy of nature. For establishing this conclusion, important hints may be collected from Clarke's *Letters to Dodwell*, where, although the reasoning may be insufficient to demonstrate the proposition which the author had in view, it affords, at least, a satisfactory refutation of all those cavils against a future state which sceptics

have founded on the supposition of our thinking powers being the result of our bodily organization.

Before proceeding to examine the moral evidences for a future state, it may be of use to remark, in farther confirmation of some of the foregoing reasonings, that there is nothing *absurd* in the supposition, nor contrary to the analogy of those laws by which we know the universe to be governed. There is nothing even contrary to the analogy of what we have already experienced in the former history of our own being. The change which takes place in the state of the infant at the moment of its birth may perhaps be analogous to the change we are destined to undergo at the moment of our dissolution. And it is probable, that, if an infant in the womb were capable of reflecting on its condition, it would be as apprehensive of the consequences of birth as we are of those of death. Some beautiful illustrations of this idea are to be found in Bishop Butler,* and indeed in various other authors, both ancient and modern. It is touched upon with a pathetic simplicity by Sir John Davis,† in the poem which I already quoted, [p. 172]; and Marcus Antoninus avails himself of it as an argument to reconcile us to the appointed order of nature in the termination of human life.

"It becomes a wise man neither to be inconsiderate, impetuous, or ostentatiously contemptuous about death, but to await the season of it as one of the operations of Nature. As you are now awaiting the season when the fœtus shall come out of the womb of your wife, thus await the season when your soul shall fall out of these its teguments."[1]

The transformation of insects has been brought in aid of the same pleasing idea; and although, when taken by itself, no stress can be laid upon it as a philosophical argument, yet, when joined to other considerations, it will not appear without some force to those who have directed their attention to the

* [*Analogy*, Part I. ch. i., *bis;* Vol. I. p. 16 and p. 36, edit. Glasgow, 1764.]

† [*Of the Immortality of the Soul*, sect. xxxiii.]

[1] *De Rebus Suis*, Lib. IX. §. iii.—See also in Seneca's *Epistles*, end of Letter cii.

analogies of nature. It shows, at least, that the supposition is not quite *anomalous*, when compared with what we actually know of the works of God; and it accords happily with the numberless instances in which the instincts and the economy of the lower animals seem to have been intended to typify to the fancy the arts of human life, and the arrangements of human affairs.

Dr. Butler himself has not thought it unworthy of his notice,* and Dr. Ferguson, in the following passage, has adorned it, not only with the recommendation of his eloquence, but almost with the colours of poetry.

"It has been observed that the Author of Nature appears to delight in variety; and we may now add, not merely in the variety of description that may serve to distinguish quiescent natures, but in the variety of steps also incident to the progress and continued existence of one and the same being.

"Such are the successive variations exhibited in every part of the vegetable, the animal, and the intellectual kingdom. Among these there are examples of progression coming in one line or direction to an end, but renewed in a different one. The butterfly originates in a species of egg, which is deposited on the leaf of a plant, from which the animal after he is hatched may derive his nourishment. He lives at first in the form of a worm or caterpillar. He enjoys the food that is provided for him, and, as far as we are qualified to observe, bears no prognostic of any farther destination. But, having grown to a certain dimension, he becomes restless in his place, and removes to some place of retreat, in which he may repose and end his life undisturbed. He mounts to some height from the ground, and makes himself fast, while his animal functions are suspended, or apparently cease. In the meantime he takes a new form, and, cased with an inflexible crust, becomes what the naturalists have called an aurelia or chrysalis, without any power of local motion, or any appearance of life.

"But to the changes which he has thus undergone succeeds in the proper season a change still farther removed from his

* [*Analogy*, Part I. chap. i.]

original state. He awakes from his torpid condition, breaks the crust of the chrysalis in which he was cased, is borne aloft upon wings variegated in the pride of most beautiful colours; and thus from a reptile that crept on the ground, or devoured the grosser part of a leaf on which he was hatched, he comes to perform all his movements in the air, and scarcely touches a plant but to suck from its flower the finest part of the juices; he sports in the sun, and displays the activity of a new life, during the heat and the light of noon."[1]

SECT. II.—OF THE EVIDENCES FOR A FUTURE STATE ARISING FROM THE HUMAN CONSTITUTION, AND FROM THE CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH MAN IS PLACED.

The presumptions hitherto suggested in proof of a future state, and which are drawn from the *nature* of mind, form what is commonly called the *metaphysical* argument on this subject. Those which I am now to state form what is called *moral* argument. They are drawn chiefly from a comparison of the constitution of man with the circumstances in which he is placed at present; and when combined together they form a mass of evidence incomparably more satisfactory and impressive than any conviction arising from metaphysical disquisitions.

The field of speculation which the *moral argument* for a future state opens to the mind is so extensive, or rather so boundless, that in the following remarks I must confine my attention to a few of those particulars which appear to myself to be more peculiarly important. Among these the most obvious, and to the bulk of mankind one of the most striking, is the presumption arising from,—

(1*st*,) The natural *desire* of immortality, and the anticipations of futurity inspired by *hope*.

These desires and anticipations are not to be confounded

[1] *Principles of Moral and Political Science*, Vol. I. pp. 324, 325. [Part I. chap. iii. sect. 14.]

with the animal principle of *self-preservation*, nor even with that *love of life* which is natural to every man who is in good health and spirits, and whose situation in the world is easy and comfortable. The instinctive principle of self-preservation operates with as little reflection on our part as the winking of our eyelids when the organ of sight is threatened with a sudden injury, or as the effort we make to preserve the balance of the body when we are in danger of falling. And as for the cool and deliberate love of life, it is founded chiefly on our attachment to sensual enjoyments, or to those frivolous distinctions that are connected with our present condition; whereas the desire of *immortality* arises from our *rational nature*, from our ardent aspirings at excellence and perfection, and from the consciousness we have of the indefinite progress of which our powers are capable. Indeed, the most effectual of all remedies against that inordinate love of life which interferes with the discharge of our duties, is a firm conviction of the soul's immortality; that conviction which can alone enable a rational mind to "smile at the dagger and defy its point." Even in those men who are the most sceptical on this subject, when they sacrifice life in a worthy cause, and from a regard to the obligation of conscience, they are probably influenced at the moment (perhaps unknowingly to themselves, for we are not always acquainted with the real motives of our own actions) by some indistinct anticipations of a future existence. For what is the exultation accompanying a good conscience but a fearless confidence in futurity, or, in other words, a conviction that we have recommended ourselves to the favour of the Righteous Governor of the universe. On the other hand, where the hope and belief of immortality are eradicated from the mind by habits of dissipation or of profligacy, and where sensual enjoyments are regarded as the sole constituents of happiness, a mean and cowardly love of life seldom fails to prevail. The prayer ascribed to Mecænas is the genuine wish of such an Epicurean.

"Debilem facito manu,
Debilem pede, coxa;

Tuber adstrue gibberum,
Lubricos quate dentes;
Vita dum superest, bene est.
Hanc mihi, vel acutâ
Si sedeam cruce, sustine."[1]

Perhaps, however, even in this wretched attachment to life which has been frequently discovered by profligates under the greatest pressure of bodily sufferings, and when their minds seem to have been completely relieved by habits of scepticism from all prospect of future punishment, we may trace the secret workings of that instinctive horror at annihilation which is probably inseparable from the human constitution.

As the love of life is a distinct principle from the desire of immortality, so those occasional longings for death which good men may feel, when tired and satiated with earthly enjoyments, or when those tender ties are broken which united their hearts to this world, are carefully to be distinguished from a wish for annihilation. The truth is, that it is in such situations that the desire and hope of a future and a better existence are most strongly felt; and that this desire and hope, although they contribute powerfully to reconcile us to our lot, and afford us the strongest motives to remain without murmuring in the station which is assigned us, are yet in a great degree the causes of the disrelish we occasionally feel for life and its pursuits, and of the satisfaction with which we look forward to the grave. I do not deny that a wish for annihilation may have been felt by some men whose prospects of futurity were alarming, and perhaps by others of the worthiest dispositions when under the influence of a gloomy imagination. There is, too, a certain state of lassitude, inactivity, and apathy, which probably most men have experienced, which renders us not only averse to every exertion, but disposes us to wish for rest rather than enjoyment. In this diseased state of the mind it is possible that the prospect of annihilation might give little disquiet, and might even be more agreeable than that of the

[1] Seneca, *Epistolæ*, ci.

"Mecenas fut un galant homme,
Il a dit quelque part: qu'on me rende impotent,
Cul-de-jatte, goutteux, manchot; pourvu qu'en somme,
Je vive; c'est assez, je suis plus que content."
La Fontaine, *Fables.*

active scenes on which we may afterwards enter.[1] But the general fact unquestionably is, that an ardent desire of immortality is natural to every mind whose prospects are not darkened by remorse, or by a constitutional melancholy, and which is capable of exerting all its various faculties in full vigour. It deserves, too, to be remarked, that this desire is felt most strongly by the best and wisest of men, by those who have devoted their lives to the pursuit of knowledge and to the practice of virtue; and that they who give the readiest reception to the cavils of sceptics, and who can most easily reconcile themselves to the thoughts of annihilation, are men who are devoted to sensual pursuits, or who are intoxicated with the vanity of earthly distinctions. This is not owing merely to anticipations of reward and of punishment, but to the different ideas of *happiness* which these two classes of men have formed. The one places it in intellectual and moral pleasures, which we know may be enjoyed to the last moment of life, and which we can conceive to be enjoyed in much higher perfection when the soul is separated from the body. The other places it in animal gratifications, which are peculiar to a certain period of life, for which we lose our relish as we advance in years, and which, in all probability, will be confined to this first and lowest stage of our existence.

To this cause it is probably owing, that in most cases the

[1] Such seems to have been the state of Gray's mind when he wrote his *Ode* to his friend Mr. West,—"Barbaras sedes aditure mecum," &c. In this *Ode* the following stanzas occur:—

"O ego felix, vice si (nec unquam
Surgerem rursus) simili cadentem
Parca me lenis sineret quieto
Fallere Letho!

"Multa flagranti radiisque cincto
Integris ah! quam nihil inviderem,
Cum Dei ardentes medius quadrigas
Sentit Olympus?"

In the Appendix to a work entitled *Memoirs of Dr. Joseph Priestley, written by himself, with a continuation by his son Joseph Priestley*, these stanzas are quoted as a proof that Gray did *not* look forward with anxious hope to a future state.—See *Appendix*, No. ii. p. 318. The authors of this Appendix, we are given to understand in the title page, were Thomas Cooper, President Judge of the fourth district of Pennsylvania, and the Rev. William Christie. In reply to this remark, I have only to refer the reader to the second volume of *Gray's Works* by Mason, p. 140.—(Letter xxxi. from Mr. Gray to Mr. Stonehewer.) [Quoted in previous volume of the present work, Note D, p. 415.]

desire and *hope* of a future existence increase in our declining years, to the support of which they are then more peculiarly necessary. Plato alludes to this fact in that fine and pathetic phrase of *ἐλπὶς γηροτρόφος*, which he quotes from Pindar; a phrase which conveys so much in two words, that I shall not run the risk of weakening it by attempting to illustrate it by any comment.[1]

Now, what inference are we to draw from this natural desire and expectation? That they are subservient while we are here to the best of purposes, by increasing our happiness and animating our virtue, cannot be disputed. Perhaps it may be supposed that this was the *very* purpose, and the *only* purpose, which they were intended to answer; that we are encouraged by nature to indulge them, merely to render us happier in this world, and better members of society: but that we ought not to conclude from this that they will ever be gratified. But is not this supposition founded on a sceptical weakness, similar to what some men have indulged with respect to the immutability of truth, and the competency of the human faculties to discover it? If such suggestions are listened to, there is an end of all reasoning and all belief. That what is clearly demonstrated to our faculties is eternally and immutably true, the constitution of our nature forces us to believe; and when we reflect on the attributes of the Deity, we feel this conviction if possible strengthened. In like manner, whatever desires are evidently implanted in our minds by nature, and are encouraged by the noblest and worthiest principles of our constitution, we may

[1] The following are the words of Heyne:—"Plato, *De Rep.* l. p. 330, E. 331, A. *τῷ μηδὲν ἑαυτῷ* (*ἄδικον* addit Stobæus, qui h. l. exscripsit, p. 756,) *ξυνειδότι ἡδεῖα ἐλπὶς ἀεὶ πάρεστι, καὶ ἀγαθὴ γηροτρόφος, ὡς καὶ Πίνδαρος λέγει. Χαρίεντως γάρ που τοῦτ' ἐκεῖνος εἶπεν, ὅτι ὃς ἂν δικαίως καὶ ὁσίως τὸν βίον διαγάγῃ,*

γλυκεῖα οἱ καρδίαν ἀτιτάλλοισα γηροτρόφος ξυναορεῖ ἐλπίς, ἃ μάλιστα θνατῶν πολύστροφον γνώμαν κυβερνᾷ.

"*Quicunque juste sancteque vitam exegerit, dulcis eum cor nutriens, senectutem fovens, comitatur spes, quæ maxime mortalium volubilem animum gubernat.*—Versus restituit Hermannus.

γλυκεῖά οἱ καρδίαν ἀτιτάλλοισα γηροτρόφος ξυναορεῖ
ἐλπίς, ἃ μάλιστα θνατῶν
πολύστροφον γνώμαν κυβερνᾷ."

Pindari Carmina et Fragmenta, cum Adnotationibus; iterum curavit Chr. Gottl. Heyne. Vol. III. pp. 80, 81. Lipsiæ, 1817.

reasonably conclude, will in due time be gratified under the government of a Being infinite both in power and goodness. At least it must be allowed, that, if other considerations appear favourable to our future expectations, the natural desires of the human mind ought to be allowed some force in strengthening the presumption.

(2*dly;*) Let us reflect, in the second place, on the natural sentiment of the mind when under the influence of remorse. A murder (we shall suppose) has been perpetrated, from motives of fraud or revenge, without any human witness, and without any circumstance that could lead to a detection. No punishment is to be apprehended from any earthly tribunal. Is this sufficient to quiet the apprehensions of the murderer? Experience shows us the reverse, and furnishes numberless instances in which the recollection of such a crime, though committed with every circumstance of privacy, has been sufficient to poison all the enjoyments which luxury could offer, and even to render life itself insupportable. In vain the murderer seeks for a refuge from the persecutions of conscience by mingling in the busy scenes of life. He has lost the intrepidity of innocence, and trembles to look even his friends in the face, lest his guilt should appear through all the disguises of his countenance. From society he flies to solitude, which affords a good man a retreat from the storms of fortune; and where the soul, long harassed with cares, and sick of the restraints which the world imposes, indulges the natural current of its thoughts and feelings, and gradually regains its strength and its serenity. But the pleasures of solitude are known to the virtuous alone. To the guilty it is full of terrors. Every walk is haunted with spectres, and the tranquillity and peace he sees around him only render his guilt and his danger the more striking to himself and the more alarming. Even the reflection that his crimes have passed unpunished on earth, serves at times to aggravate his horrors. The blood he has spilt seems on that very account to call the louder to Heaven for vengeance; and he conceives his punishment in a future state to be the more certain and the

more unavoidable, that he has made no atonement while here to the society he has injured. Under the influence of such apprehensions, a murderer has been frequently known, many years after the perpetration of the crime, to feel his existence so intolerable a burden, that he has voluntarily revealed his own guilt, and delivered himself up to an ignominious death. The vulgar generally believe that Providence sometimes interferes by a miracle to bring secret murders to light; but in this, as in other instances, Providence acts agreeably to general laws, and has provided a restraint on this most dreadful of all crimes, by that infatuation which remorse produces, and which seldom fails, sooner or later, to lead to a detection. Facts of this sort are surely strong indications of the moral government of God, and afford strong presumptions of a future retribution.

(3*dly;*) The observations which have hitherto been made relate entirely to those anticipations of futurity which nature forces occasionally on the minds of all men, even of those who are the least disposed to serious reflection. Let us now consider the presumptions which arise from a more extensive and philosophical survey of our faculties and of our situation in the world.

When we examine the instincts and the external condition of the lower animals, we find them to be exactly accommodated to those desires and wants which nature has given them. What were the ultimate purposes of their creation it is impossible for us to ascertain. Some of them seem to be placed in this world chiefly for the use of man, so wonderfully are their instincts adapted to his purposes; others, perhaps, were intended for no farther end than to taste to a certain degree of the bounty of their Maker, and (as Goldsmith expresses it) "to animate the solitudes of nature." But, with respect to all of them, we may remark an exact accommodation of their condition to their desires and to their capacities of enjoyment. These desires and enjoyments seem to be entirely of the *sensual* kind, excepting perhaps when an animal is under the influence of the conjugal or the parental affections, or in the case of those

who delight in the society of their own species. But whatever desires or whatever capacities of enjoyment any animal is possessed of, the object fitted to gratify it is supplied by nature, and the animal is guided by an unerring impulse to the employment of those means by which the object is to be attained. The enjoyments may be low in comparison to ours, but they are suited to the creatures for whom they are destined, and they are not degraded in their estimation by any mortifying comparisons with the pleasures which belong to superior orders of beings. Indeed, they do not seem to have the least curiosity about the nature of any of the objects which surround them. As the use of reason for the gratification of their wants is superseded by their instincts, the powers of observation and reflection have been kindly withheld from them; and, as nature has in a great measure taken upon herself the care of their subsistence and accommodation, and employs them as blind instruments for the accomplishment of her purposes, so she seems to have relieved them of any anxiety for the future by limiting their views to the present moment.

How different is all this from the condition of man! He is left in many respects to the guidance of his own understanding, and is incapable of accommodating his conduct to the established course of nature, till he has made himself acquainted with it by experience and observation. To this observation of nature he is prompted not only by his necessities, but by the principle of *curiosity*, which leads him to prosecute his researches even when his situation is easy and comfortable; and which therefore does not appear, like the instincts of the brutes, to be subservient merely to the accommodation of his present existence. It may be said, perhaps, that even when our curiosity engages us in inquiries which are merely speculative, we are not entitled to conclude that these inquiries will never be attended with any practical utility; that many discoveries highly important to mankind have been made by men who had no views of their application at the time, and who perhaps lived many ages before these views occurred; and that therefore an important use of the principle of curiosity may be traced with-

out extending our views beyond the present world. The objection, I acknowledge, is so far just; but still it seems to me that this principle has a manifest reference to higher purposes. If man was intended only to be an inhabitant of this globe, and if the principle of curiosity was bestowed on him only in subserviency to his accommodation here, whence is it that he is in general led to inquire more anxiously about distant and singular phenomena than about those which, from their nearness or frequency, we should expect to be the most interesting? Whence is it that his curiosity extends beyond the surface of this globe, or at least beyond those astronomical facts which may admit of a practical application? Whence is it that he delights in tracing the orbit and computing the motions of a planet invisible to the naked eye, or in predicting the return of a comet many ages after he shall be laid in the dust? But perhaps little could be inferred from our curiosity on these subjects, if we were not so wonderfully supplied with the means of gratifying it. Such, however, are the powers of the human mind, that while the science of medicine remains involved in uncertainty and error; while the structure of the human body is still imperfectly known; while mechanics are not yet agreed about the best form of the plough,—we are able to contemplate the provisions which nature has made for supplying light to the superior and more distant planets; we are able to measure the velocity of light itself; and, without passing the boundaries of the visible universe, can transport ourselves in imagination to regions where the earth and all the planetary spaces vanish from the eye. Even, however, when we are arrived at this limit, we feel that the distance we have passed is but a point in comparison of that infinite space which forces itself on the mind with an irresistible conviction of its necessary existence.

With respect to our own globe, how eager is our curiosity to know the transactions of those generations which have occupied it before us! And after exhausting all the treasures of remote antiquity, how do we complain of the shortness of that period which limits the province of history! Our views, too, are often turned forwards to the dark regions of futurity, where we see

time, like *space*, stretching to infinity, and we cannot help inquiring what events are likely to happen in succeeding ages. Shall one generation of men follow another in endless succession, and each return to its original nothing? Or is this world only a state of preparation for higher scenes, where our intellectual and moral powers may continually advance nearer and nearer to perfection?

I have hitherto taken no notice of that curiosity we feel concerning the great Author of all the wonders we see around us. Few will dispute that it is natural and reasonable in man to inquire concerning his own origin and that of the various tribes of animals he sees continually rising into existence; concerning that power which put in motion the different parts of the material universe, and that wisdom which is the source of its order and beauty. Our inquiries on these subjects are essentially different, both in their nature and object, from all the others in which we can employ our faculties; and our disposition to engage in them affords a presumption in favour of a future state perfectly distinct from those that arise from our restless and insatiable curiosity about the objects of science; and a presumption, we may add, not liable to the same objections which might possibly be urged against some of the foregoing reasonings. In our astronomical and physical researches, for example, our object is to ascertain the laws of nature; or, in other words, to discover and to classify facts; and consequently, our inquiries, though they lead us into a more extensive field, are precisely the same in kind with those which lay the foundation of the practical arts, and of our conduct in the common affairs of life. It might perhaps, therefore, be imagined that our curiosity concerning the distant parts of the universe, and the discoveries to which it has led, do not justify the conclusions I formerly deduced from them, as these discoveries are only to be regarded as the accidental and unavoidable result of principles which were implanted in our minds for very different purposes: That although the knowledge of many astronomical facts may not be subservient to our accommodation here, and although our faculties were not bestowed

on us in order that we might be qualified for discovering them, yet that the same measure of curiosity and of genius which was necessary for the purposes of life could not fail to bring also to light a variety of truths which do not admit of a practical application. But what shall we say of our curiosity concerning the Author of Nature, and the satisfaction we derive in contemplating the marks of power, wisdom, and goodness which are impressed on his works? To what purpose are we rendered capable of elevating our thoughts to him, if we are never to enjoy a clearer view of his nature and attributes, and of the manner in which he governs the material and the moral world? All that philosophy discovers to us with respect to the events which happen in either, and all that is useful for the purposes of human life to know, amounts only to this, that particular events are constantly conjoined together, so that when we see the one we may expect the other; but although we can discover no more, curiosity is not satisfied. Our constitution determines us to believe that every event requires an efficient cause, or implies the operation of power. And it is this principle of our nature which suggests the belief of a Deity. But how he operates, whether mediately or immediately, and how the connexion between mind and matter is carried on, are questions which, although they must excite the curiosity of every man capable of reflection, we may venture to say will never be resolved by human genius. Wherever we direct our inquiries, whether to the anatomy and physiology of animals, to the growth of vegetables, to the chemical attractions and repulsions, or to the motions of the heavenly bodies, we perpetually perceive the effects of powers which cannot belong to mere matter. To a certain length we are able to proceed; but in every research we meet with an impassable line—a line which is marked with sufficient distinctness, and which no man now thinks of passing who has just views of the nature and object of philosophy. It was indeed by pointing it out that Bacon did so much service to science. But although the nature of these powers, and the mode of their operations, are not the objects of our knowledge at present, we are certain of their

existence, and of their acting in subserviency to wise design. So much it was necessary for man to know, to lay a foundation for natural religion, and we can conceive no other purpose to which this knowledge is subservient. It was plainly intended, then, that man should have the idea of overruling power and wisdom: but to what end this idea if we are not to exist hereafter? And why is our curiosity so strong with respect to things beyond the limit of human inquiry, but to lead our thoughts forward to futurity? If it has not this effect on the mind, the contemplation of the infinite perfections of the Deity, and even a view of the magnificence of the material universe, could only serve to damp the ardour of human pursuits, and make the business of life appear unworthy of our regard. When we return from our excursions through the immensity of space and time to a view of ourselves and of the globe we inhabit, what a short span does human life appear, and how contemptible this boasted theatre of human ambition! "Hoc est punctum, quod inter tot gentes ferro et igni dividitur? . . . —Cum te in illa vere magna sustuleris; quotiens videbis exercitus sub rectis ire vexillis. . . . Libebit dicere:

'It nigrum campis agmen.'

Formicarum iste discursus est in angusto laborantium."[1]

> "O pudor! O stolidi præceps vesania voti!
> Quantula pars rerum est, in qua se gloria jactat,
> Ira fremit, metus exanimat, dolor urit, egestas
> Cogit opes; ferro, insidiis, flamma atque veneno
> Cernitur, et trepido fervent humana tumultu."[2]

Such reflections can scarcely fail to force themselves on every mind which contrasts the field of its present exertions with those enlarged prospects of the universe which philosophy opens; and they are certainly reflections which neither contribute to make us happier in ourselves, nor more useful citizens. On the contrary, their tendency in both respects is so manifestly unfavourable, that it may be safely affirmed, that, if man had no intimations of a future existence, it would have been better

[1] Seneca, [*Nat. Quæst.*, Lib. I. Præf.]

[2] Buchananus, *De Sphæra*, Lib. I. 678, last lines.

for him never to have extended his views beyond this globe and the period of human life, instead of embracing, as at present, a stretch of duration and of space which throws a ridicule on the whole history of human affairs.

But if, on the other hand, we vary the supposition, and are led by a view of the magnificence of nature and the Divine perfections to look forward to a better world, the scene in which we are placed at present will be dignified in our estimation from the important purposes to which it is subservient; and while we pity the folly of those who consider earthly enjoyments as the ultimate objects of their pursuit, we will feel ourselves called on by the most powerful motives to a strenuous discharge of all our various duties.

These observations sufficiently show, that, if man was created for this life alone, he possesses faculties above his condition; and that, if he were to act upon the supposition of his annihilation at death, the extensive views he is able to form of the universe would render him more unfit to perform his part as a member of society, than if his intellectual attainments had been more moderate and confined. But if our *faculties* are above our condition, our *curiosity* is still greater than our faculties can satisfy. And here, if I am not mistaken, we may perceive an additional intimation of our future destiny.

It is justly observed by Mr. Maclaurin, in his view of Newton's Discoveries, as a very remarkable circumstance in our present condition,—"That the inhabitants of this earth are entirely cut off from all communication with the other great bodies of the universe, and that it is highly probable that similar obstacles prevent the possibility of a communication betwixt the other planets and betwixt the different systems. We are able by telescopes to discover very plainly mountains, precipices, and cavities in the moon; but who tread those precipices, or what purpose those great cavities serve, we know not; and we are at a loss to conceive how this planet, without any atmosphere, vapours, or seas, (as is now the common opinion of astronomers,) can serve for like purposes as our earth. We observe sudden and surprising revolutions on the surface of the

great planet Jupiter, which would be fatal to the inhabitants of the earth. We observe in them all enough to raise our curiosity, but not to satisfy it. From hence, as well as from the state of the moral world, and many other considerations, we are induced to believe that our present state would be very imperfect without a subsequent one, wherein our views of nature and of its great Author may be more clear and satisfactory. It does not appear suitable to the wisdom that shines throughout all nature, to suppose that we should see so far, and have our curiosity so much raised concerning the works of God, only to be disappointed at the end. As man is undoubtedly the chief being upon this globe, and this globe may be no less considerable in the most valuable respects than any other in the solar system, and this system, for aught we know, not inferior to any in the universal system, so, if we should suppose man to perish without ever arriving at a more complete knowledge of nature than the very imperfect one he attains in his present state, by analogy or parity of reason, we might conclude, that the like desires would be frustrated in the inhabitants of all the other planets and systems, and that the beautiful scheme of nature would never be unfolded, but in an exceedingly imperfect manner, to any of them. This, therefore, naturally leads us to consider our present state as only the dawn or beginning of our existence, and as a state of preparation or probation for farther advancement; which appears to have been the opinion of the most judicious philosophers of old. And whoever attentively considers the constitution of human nature, particularly the desires and passions of men, which appear greatly superior to their present objects, will easily be persuaded that man was designed for higher views than of this life. These the Author of Nature may have in reserve, to be opened up to us at proper periods of time, and after due preparation. Surely it is in his power to grant us a far greater improvement of the faculties we already possess, or even to endow us with new faculties, of which at this time we have no idea, for penetrating farther into the scheme of nature, and approaching nearer unto himself, the First and Supreme Cause. We know not how far it was proper

or necessary that we should not be let into knowledge at once, but should advance gradually; that by comparing new objects or new discoveries with what was known to us before, our improvement might be more complete and regular; or how far it might be necessary or advantageous that intelligent beings should pass through a kind of infancy of knowledge; for new knowledge does not consist so much in our having access to a new object, as in comparing it with others already known, observing its relations to them, or discerning what it has in common with them, and wherein their disparity consists. Thus our knowledge is vastly greater than the sum of what all its objects separately could afford; and when a new object comes within our reach, the addition to our knowledge is the greater the more we already know, so that it increases not as the new objects increase, but in a much higher proportion."[1]

Having said so much with respect to our *intellectual powers*, and the disproportion which they bear to the scene of their present exertions, I proceed to consider another presumption in favour of a future state, suggested by our means of *enjoyment*, contrasted with the conceptions of happiness and of perfection which we are able to form.

In appealing to this contrast, I do not mean to deny that there is a rich variety of genuine pleasures placed within our reach even at present, and that the sum of happiness in human life far exceeds the sum of misery. But still the happiness which falls to the lot even of the most fortunate, bears no proportion to what we can conceive, or to that of which we feel our natures to be capable. The pleasures of a good conscience are indeed satisfactory and sublime; but how many are the imperfections even of the most virtuous! How much of their life is spent before they attain to a uniform and settled tranquillity, by correcting the defects of their constitutional or acquired tempers, and by subduing the violence of their youthful passions! How often is their serenity overset by an hereditary melancholy, or by those bodily diseases which disturb

[1] Maclaurin's *Account of Sir Isaac Newton's Philosophical Discoveries*, Book VI. chap. ix.

the imagination! Nor is it only *our own* imperfections which affect our tranquillity. How often is it disturbed by those of our friends! How often do we see a trifling collision of passions or of interests interrupt the harmony of men who would willingly sacrifice their lives for each other; or a groundless suspicion and misapprehension occasion a temporary coldness between those who, if they could read each other's hearts, would see every thought pure, honourable, and sincere! While we are mortified with these reflections, can we avoid cherishing the hope, that the time will come when our own characters shall approach nearer to that ideal perfection to which nature teaches us to aspire; when the sunshine of the soul shall be no longer liable to be overcast by the gloom of imagination or the storms of the passions; and when, in the society of those whom we loved on earth, freed with us from the weaknesses of mortality, we shall enjoy the intercourse of minds unobscured by earthly prejudices, and indulge the kind affections of the heart, unalloyed by the possibility of change or of separation?

Upon this disproportion between our conceptions of happiness and the possible attainments of human nature, is founded (according to the ingenious remark of Lord Bacon) the delight we derive from the fictions of poetical imagination. And this delight, which is one of the purest and most exquisite we are capable of enjoying, is considered by the same profound and original writer as furnishing a strong proof that the principles of our constitution have a reference to higher scenes than those with which our senses are conversant at present.[1]

[1] "Cum enim mundus sensibilis sit anima rationali dignitate inferior, videtur Poësis hæc humanæ naturæ largiri, quæ Historia denegat; atque animo umbris rerum utcunque satisfacere, cum solida haberi non possunt. Si quis enim rem acutius introspiciat, firmum ex Poësi sumitur argumentum, magnitudinem rerum magis illustrem, ordinem magis perfectum, et varietatem magis pulchram, animæ humanæ complacere quam in natura ipsa, post lapsum reperire ullo modo possit. Quapropter cum res gestæ et eventus, qui veræ Historiæ subjiciuntur, non sint ejus amplitudinis, in qua anima humana sibi satisfaciat, præsto est Poësis, quæ facta magis Heroica confingat: Cum Historia vera successus rerum, minime pro meritis virtutem et scelerum narret, corrigit eam Poësis, et exitus et fortunas, secundum merita et ex lege Nemeseos exhibet. Cum Historia vera, obvia rerum satietate et similitudine, animæ humanæ fastidio

To the truth of the fact on which this argument of Bacon's proceeds, most men, I believe, will be ready to bear witness from their own experience, that the happiness of human life falls far short of those conceptions which the mind has a capacity and a disposition to form. But, abstracting entirely from this consideration, and supposing all our dreams of happiness to be realized, could we fail at times to reflect on the precarious tenure by which we hold all our comforts? That a moment may dissolve our tenderest connexions, and leave us only the remembrance of happiness which is never to return? Or, if we should be so fortunate as to escape from those severer trials, that the inevitable hour is approaching when we must take a last farewell of all that is dear to us. These pangs, arising from the dissolution of the social connexions, are peculiar to man. The other animals, as I already hinted, seem to enjoy in some degree the pleasures of conjugal and parental affection; but their connexions with each other are only temporary, and are plainly subservient to no other purpose than the continuation of their kind; a circumstance (by the way) which, added to some considerations formerly mentioned, affords a very striking instance of the benevolent care our Maker has taken to save his sensitive creatures from unnecessary sufferings.[1] They have no anticipation of the future, and of conse-

sit, reficit eam Poësis, inexpectata et varia et vicissitudinum plena canens. Adeo ut Poësis ista, non solum ad delectationem, sed etiam ad animi magnitudinem et ad mores conferat."—*De Aug. Scient.* Lib. II. cap. xiii. (For a translation of this passage see *Tatler*, No. cviii.)

[1] The following observations have a sufficient connexion with the foregoing argument to justify their insertion here as a note.

"The spot of the *medulla spinalis*, where its two ascending main nerves that form the great brain cross one another, so that the left fasciculus of the nerves proceeds to the right, and the right fasciculus to the left hemisphere, this spot being injured there is at once an end of life, as is proved by the following facts:—

[*1st.*] "Butchers and huntsmen know by experience that the least injury offered to this spot will be instantly fatal. The butcher will plunge his knife accordingly into the neck of the ox at that spot, and so at once cuts through the contexture of the nerves. The consequence is, that the animal falls down, and after a few convulsions ceases to live. The huntsmen proceed on the same principle when they cut through the neck of the game.

"2*d*. *Those animals that kill others*,

quence no anxiety about the termination of their existence; and they are freed almost entirely from the pangs which attend the dissolution of the conjugal and parental connexions. As the case in all these respects is different with man, we may reasonably presume that these deductions from his happiness are intended to answer important purposes.[1]

will always seize them by the neck, and bite through that part. In this manner the hound will kill the hare, and the bird of prey its quarry. The pole-cat worries its prey at a single spring; and Dr. Gall, that he might be thoroughly acquainted with the process, locked up a pole-cat for some time, during which he fed it only upon bones till its teeth were blunted. Whilst the pole-cat's teeth remained blunt, it was not able to kill the rabbits that were put into its kennel with the same dispatch as formerly; but when they had again grown sharp, Gall observed, that, on the very first leap it made on the rabbit, it cut the little animal's neck on that very spot with a sharp fang, and instantaneous death ensued. He observed the same thing at a hawking party of the Emperor Joseph the Second. As soon as the hawk had reached the hare, it would immediately cut through that part of her neck with its bill."—Gall's System of the Functions of the Brain; extracted from Charles Augustus Bloede's *Account of Gall's Lectures at Dresden.* Translated from the German to serve as an Explanatory Companion to Gall's Plaster Skulls.—See pp. 67, 68.

[1] For the length of the following note I have no apology to offer; it is enough to say that it is from the eloquent pen of D'Alembert.

"M. de Sacy mourut le 26 Octobre 1727, âgé de soixante treize ans, chargé de travaux et de vertus, laissant à ses amis le plus cher souvenir, aux gens de lettres le plus digne modèle, aux gens de bien les plus justes regrets. Madame de Lambert, plus âgée que lui de sept ans, et dont l'amitié fidèle et pure avoit fait la douceur de sa vie, lui survécut pour conserver et honorer sa mémoire. Digne et triste objet de ses pleurs, il n'en eut point de repandre sur elle. Ainsi la nature, qui avoit tant fait pour le bonheur de M. de Sacy, y mit le comble par une vieillesse heureuse et paisible, exempte de ce sentiment douloureux que laisse au fond du cœur une perte éternelle et irréparable; sentiment dont l'impression est d'autant plus profonde, que l'âme trouve une espèce d'attrait à s'y livrer, et de douceur à en goûter l'amertume; sentiment que sa tristesse même rend en quelque manière désirable, puisqu'il nous fait regarder la mort comme un bienfait de la nature, non parce qu'elle met fin à des larmes qui nous sont chères, mais parce que ce malheur de l'humanité, si c'est un malheur de cesser de souffrir, nous est du moins commun avec ceux que nous avons tendrement aimés, et nous laisse l'espoir consolant de les suivre bientôt dans cet asile éternel et paisible, où leur ombre nous a précédés, et où leur voix nous appelle. Madame de Lambert, qui survécut encore six années à M. de Sacy, entretint et nourrit toujours ce sentiment cher à son cœur. Elle y joignit un espoir plus consolant encore, celui que la divinité bienfaisante donne aux âmes vertueuses, de se réunir un jour pour n'avoir plus à pleurer leur séparation; espoir en effet si propre à soulager les maux des cœurs sensibles: espoir dont la malheureuse

(*4thly;*) There is another part of our constitution which seems to have a manifest reference to a future state. Our moral habits continue improving to the last hour of life, and are frequently strengthened and confirmed in a very remarkable degree amidst those painful and lingering struggles which precede our dissolution. Now, all those powers of our nature, which appear to be accommodated to our present state alone, begin after a certain period to decline. This is the case with all the active powers of the body, and all the organs of perception. As we find then our moral habits are capable of improvement to the last, are we not entitled to conclude that they are intended, not merely for discharging our duties in society, but to qualify us for another existence? Indeed, were the case otherwise, it would be difficult to give any plausible account of the sufferings which commonly put a period to the life of man, and which exceed so remarkably those which fall to the share of any other species of animals.

What I have said with respect to moral habits is applicable also to our intellectual desires. In the case of those who have devoted themselves to study, the ardour of curiosity frequently continues to the last unabated, and even increasing. And here, too, a boundless field of improvement opens to our view, both in our faculties themselves, to the progressive enlargement

humanité avoit un besoin si pressant, qu'elle a couru, pour ainsi dire, au-devant de lui, avant que la Bonté Suprême et Eternelle voulut bien le lui présenter elle-même. Un sentiment profond et plein de vie, privé d'un objet chéri qu'il ne retrouveroit plus, et ne pouvant supporter l'idée accablante d'être anéanti pour jamais, a inspiré, intéressé, éclairé la raison, pour lui faire embrasser avec transport cette attente précieuse d'une existence immortelle, dont le premier désir n'a pas du naître dans une tête froide et philosophe, mais dans un cœur qui avoit aimé."

The foregoing passage seems to have touched the heart of even the Baron de Grimm. His words are these, speaking of the Eloges of D'Alembert in general: "Il y a de l'intérêt et de la douceur dans les éloges de Massillon, de l'Archevêque de Cambrai et de Flechier, mais il n'y en a aucun où l'on remarque une sensibilité plus vraie et plus aimable que dans celui de M. de Sacy. L'auteur y peint l'amitié comme un homme qui en a senti tout le charme et toute la puissance. *Quand M. D'Alembert fit cet éloge, il venoit de perdre Mademoiselle de Lespinasse;* on peut croire que ce tableau touchant fut tracé sur la tombe de son amie."—*Mémoires de Grimm*, Tome v. p. 150. Londres chez Colburn, 1814.—See Note D.

of which it is impossible for imagination to fix any limits; and in the objects of our knowledge, which are as infinite as the works of the Creator.

(*5thly;*) Among the various considerations, however, which intimate a relation between this world and another state of being, there is none which has had more weight in all ages with serious and thinking men of every description, (whether their minds have been enlightened by philosophy or not,) than the discordance between our moral judgments and feelings, and the course of human affairs.

That the course of human affairs is, *on the whole*, agreeable to our ideas of good and ill-desert is sufficiently obvious, not only from that self-approbation which is the inseparable attendant of virtue, but from the tendency which virtue has to procure us the favour of the world. Whoever reflects with attention upon this will perceive manifest indications that the Being who presides over the universe is interested on the side of good men; and that whatever occasional evils may befall them, their happiness is the leading object of those *general laws* by which his government is conducted.

The existence, at the same time, of these occasional evils cannot be disputed; nor is it possible to deny, that in consequence of them the moral government of God appears to us at present not altogether perfect. It is on the supposition of a future state alone that the difficulty can be removed; and without it many of the most striking phenomena of human life must remain for ever inexplicable. In some parts of the material universe we are able to trace the most complete and the most systematical order and beauty; and we invariably find that, in proportion as our knowledge extends, our views of its government become more pleasing and more satisfactory. The condition of the brutes, too, appears to us to be wonderfully accommodated to their various natures. Why then should we suppose that it is with respect to man alone that the scheme of Providence is to be left incomplete, or reject a doctrine supported by so striking a concurrence of separate and independent

arguments, which furnishes a key to all the apparent disorders of the moral world?

These presumptions in favour of this most important of all truths, drawn from the course of events in human life, are stated with great force in one of the most eloquent passages of Mr. Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, to which, on account of its length, I must beg leave to refer the reader.[1]

I am aware of an objection that may be stated to this reasoning, and which has in fact been urged with considerable ingenuity and plausibility by Mr. Hume; that the only safe principle on which we can pretend to judge of those parts of the universe which have not fallen under our examination, is by concluding them to be analogous to what we have observed.

> . . . . "Of God above or man below,
> What can we reason but from what we know?" *

Now, the only fact we know with respect to the moral government of God is, that the distribution of happiness and misery in human life, is in a great measure promiscuous. Is it not then a most extraordinary inference from this fact, to conclude that there must be a future state of existence to correct the inequalities of the present scene? Would it not be more reasonable and more agreeable to the received rules of philosophizing, to conclude either that the idea of a future state is a mere chimera; or that, if such an idea shall ever be realized, the distribution of happiness and misery will continue to be as promiscuous as we have experienced it to be? The objection, I confess, is not without some plausibility, but it will not bear an accurate examination. For—

a. Admitting the distribution of happiness and misery in human life to be altogether promiscuous, this is not the *only fact* from which we are entitled to reason concerning the moral government of God. Our own moral constitution is a part of the scheme of Providence, no less than the order of external events; and it has been already shown that this constitution

[1] See Vol. I. p. 41, [417? *seq.*, Part III. chap. v.]

* [Pope, *Essay on Man*, Ep. i. 17.]

does not accord with the scene in which it is placed, but leads us, not only to form conceptions of a more perfect order, but to hope and expect that these conceptions will some time or other be realized.

b. It is *not* a fact that the distribution of happiness and misery here is altogether indiscriminate. On the contrary, it has been shown, that, although the order of events does not correspond completely with our ideas of good and of ill-desert, it does so to so great a degree as must convince us that the reward of virtue and the punishment of vice, are the leading objects of all those general laws by which the world is governed. The exceptions which occur to these laws arise from accidental circumstances connected with our present condition; and supposing these circumstances to be removed, the *general laws* continuing exactly as at present, nothing more perhaps would be wanting to realize our hopes with respect to the moral government of the universe.

This observation coincides in part with one of Dr. Butler's concerning the *tendencies* of virtue and of vice, as contrasted with their *actual effects*.* Virtue, it is evident, would be much more amply rewarded in this world than it is, and vice much more severely punished, if the characters of individuals were completely known, and if all those who felt themselves interested in the cause of morality had power corresponding to their wishes. It is further evident, that these obstacles to the natural tendencies of virtue and of vice arise from accidental circumstances relative to our present state; whereas the tendencies themselves arise from the nature of things, (or, in other words, from the moral constitution of the human mind;) and therefore the moral government of the universe in general is to be judged of, not from what we actually see here, but from what we *would* see, if the tendencies of virtue and of vice were realized by their being placed in a more favourable scene of action.

It is also extremely worthy of our attention, (as the same profound author has farther remarked,) that virtue has a

* [*Analogy*, Part I. chaps. ii. iii.]

natural tendency to increase the power of a community or society of men in proportion as it influences the conduct of the members, by rendering the public good the common aim of their actions; by rousing the abilities of each individual to study and to promote the general interest; and by uniting them all together by the principles of justice and humanity. In this respect virtue has a natural tendency to prevail over vice, in the same manner as reason has a natural tendency to prevail over brute force. As reason, however, may, notwithstanding this tendency, be sometimes overpowered by brute force, so virtue may be sometimes overpowered by vice; but still the natural tendencies both of virtue and of reason to prevail over their opposites remain indisputable; and wherever they are prevented from being carried into effect, the natural order of things is plainly deranged or inverted.

Among the circumstances which check the natural tendencies of virtue here, it is sufficient to mention, the difficulty of knowing completely the characters of others; in consequence of which good men are prevented from forming that intimate union with each other which virtue tends to produce, and an unnatural alliance is often established between men of the most opposite views and principles. We may add to this, the shortness of human life, which seldom allows the characters of individuals to display themselves fully, or their projects of beneficence to be carried into complete execution. Other causes besides these will readily present themselves to every one; but supposing even these to be removed, what a scene would human life become! How complete would be the triumph of virtue over vice, even if the number of the wicked were to continue undiminished!

To illustrate a little more fully this observation concerning the natural tendency of virtue, Dr. Butler supposes a kingdom or society of men perfectly virtuous, to continue upon earth for a succession of ages. For his very interesting description of the happy consequences which would result from this supposition were it realized, I must refer the reader to his work.

To those who reflect seriously on the description given by

Dr. Butler,* (the chief heads of which may be easily imagined by an intelligent reader,) and who consider at the same time how extremely probable it is (from what we know of the analogies and of the unity of design displayed in the universe) that our future condition will be not wholly different *in kind* from what we have already experienced,[1] it will not appear a very extravagant idea to suppose, that in another state good men may be united together in such communities as have been now imagined; perhaps united with other beings who have been trained to like habits in other parts of the universe; for (as the same author has well observed) "the immensity of the *material* world forces us to conclude that there must be *some* scheme of Providence vast in proportion to it."† Nothing indeed could be conceived more inconsistent with that unity or analogy of design, which is everywhere conspicuous in the works of creation, than to suppose, that while all the different bodies that compose the *material* universe are manifestly related to each other, and form parts of *one* great connected whole, the *moral* events that happen on our globe are quite insulated; and that the rational beings which inhabit it, and for whom we may reasonably presume the globe was made, have no relation whatever to other intelligent and moral natures. The presumption unquestionably is, that there is *one* great *moral* system corresponding to the *material* system; and that the connexions which we are able at present to trace so distinctly among the sensible objects which compose the one, are exhibited to us as so many intimations of some vast scheme afterwards to be disclosed to us, comprehending all the intelligent beings that compose the other.

The remarks of Butler now referred to, afford, in my opinion, a satisfactory answer to the objections which they were brought to refute. If the distribution of happiness and misery in this

* [See *Analogy*, Part I. chap. i.]

1 The same idea occurs in Milton, who seems to have thought the conjecture not improbable, however different from the common belief of the world.

. . . . "What if Earth
Be but the shadow of Heaven, and things therein
Each to other like, more than on earth is thought?"—*Paradise Lost*, Book v. [174.]

† [*Analogy*, Part I. chap. iii. p. 83.]

world were perfectly indiscriminate, then undoubtedly no argument for a future state could be drawn from the general laws which regulate human affairs; or (which comes much to the same purpose) from what Dr. Butler calls the *tendencies* of virtue and of vice ;* and in that case the evidences of a future retribution would rest on the other considerations already stated. But the tendencies of virtue and of vice are even in this world sufficiently manifest to demonstrate that the general laws by which the universe is governed, are favourable to the one and hostile to the other. The distributive justice to which we look forward hereafter, is a thing not different in kind, but only in degree from what we experience here. It is only an order of things carried into *effect*, towards which we everywhere around us see a *tendency*. These tendencies, too, it must be remembered, arise from the nature of things; the obstacles to their effects are merely accidental. If these obstacles were removed, virtue and vice would *really* produce the effects which they at present *tend* to produce; or, in other words, the moral government of God would exhibit the same perfection which we trace in all the other operations of creation and Providence.

The result of all that has now been stated concerning the nature of man, considered in its relation to the circumstances in which he is placed, amounts to this,—that in the former there are many appearances to which there is nothing corresponding in the latter; and which we may therefore regard as so many intimations that the ends of our being are placed beyond the reach of our researches at present. "Whoever considers," says Dr. Ferguson, "the anatomy of the fœtus, will find in the structure of bones and muscles, in the organs of respiration and digestion, sufficient indications of a design to remove his being into a different state. The observant and intelligent may perhaps find in the mind of man parallel signs of his future destination." This remark, which was first made in his *Institutes of Moral Philosophy*,[1] he has since illustrated more fully in his larger work, where he has placed it in so striking a point of view, that I shall borrow his words as the

* [*Analogy*, Part I. chap. iii. p. 83.] [1] Published for the use of his students.

most impressive conclusion to which I can bring this part of my argument.

"If the human fœtus were qualified to reason of his prospects in the womb of his parent, as he afterwards may do in his range on this terrestrial globe, he might no doubt apprehend in the breach of his umbilical cord, and in his separation from the womb, a total extinction of life; for how could he conceive it to continue after his only supply of nourishment from the vital stock of his parent had ceased? He might, indeed, observe many parts of his organization and frame, which should seem to have no relation to his state in the womb. For what purpose, he might say, this duct which leads from the mouth to the intestines? Why these bones that each apart becomes hard and stiff, while they are separated from one another by so many flexures or joints? Why these jaws in particular made to move upon hinges, and these germs of teeth which are pushing to be felt above the surface of the gums? Why the stomach through which nothing is made to pass? And these spongy lungs, so well fitted to drink up the fluids, but into which the blood that passes everywhere else is scarcely permitted to enter?

"To these queries, which the fœtus was neither qualified to make nor to answer, we are now well apprized the proper answer would be,—the life which you now enjoy is but temporary; and these particulars which now seem to you so preposterous, are a provision which nature has made for a future course of life which you have to run, and in which their use and propriety will appear sufficiently evident.

"Such are the prognostics of a future destination that might be collected from the state of the fœtus; and similar prognostics of a destination still future, may be collected from present appearances in the life and condition of man."*

I shall only add further on this subject, the confirmation which the foregoing reasonings derive from their coincidence

* [*Principles of Moral and Political Science*, Part I. chap. iii. sect. 14.—Vol. I. p. 327]

with the universal belief of mankind. Of the reality of this belief (however disfigured by superstition and ignorance) no one can doubt, who is either acquainted with the history of the ancient world, or with the voyages of our modern navigators; and wherever the possibility of an existence after death is admitted, the doctrine of a future state is in so far confirmed by the natural sentiments of mankind, without being at all affected by the accessory articles of belief, which vary in every different instance. "That the souls of men survive the dissolution of the body," says Cicero, "we may consider as a truth sanctioned by the universal belief of all nations."—"In what manner this anticipation of ages yet to come strikes its root so deeply in the principles of our frame, I pretend not to explain."[1] Two passages which at once illustrate Cicero's own opinion concerning the force of the argument from general consent, and establish the *truth of the fact* on which the argument proceeds, as far as the history of the world was known in his age.

With respect to those rude tribes which have been visited by our modern travellers and navigators, it would be endless to enter into details. It is sufficient to observe, in general terms, that the assertion of Cicero concerning those parts of the globe with which he was acquainted, may confidently be extended to all which have been since explored. That it may not be possible to find out some exceptions to the universality of the fact, I will not venture positively to affirm,—not that I myself am disposed to think that any such exceptions do exist, but because I am unwilling to afford any ground for cavil, particularly in a case like the present, where I am in no danger of injuring my argument by the concessions I make. It is enough for my purpose to remark, that, if any tribe of men is to be found altogether destitute of religious impressions, it must be a tribe so sunk in the scale of civilisation, as to have lost at the same time the other characteristical marks of a rational and moral nature. In hazarding this assertion, I am supported by the

[1] "Permanere animos arbitramur consensu nationum omnium [*Tuscul. Quæst.* Lib. I. cap. xvi.] . . . Nescio quomodo inhæret in mentibus quasi sæculorum quoddam augurium."—[Ibid. cap. xv.]

unsuspicious authority of Mr. Hume. "Look out," says he, "for a people entirely destitute of religion: If you find them at all, be assured that they are but few degrees removed from brutes."*

I shall just add to this observation, that, in reading the accounts given by travellers of the religious opinions of savage tribes, great allowances ought to be made for the mistakes they are liable to in ascertaining the real state of the *fact*, in consequence of their imperfect acquaintance with the languages by which their information is acquired, added to the probable defects of such languages on all subjects in which abstract ideas are involved.

Many of the accounts which have been appealed to on the present occasion, contain their own refutation. Thus Father le Gobien, in his *History of the Marianne Isles*, after having affirmed that their inhabitants did not discover the slightest idea of religion, tells us immediately after, that "they practise invocation of the dead, whose skulls they preserve in their houses, and to which they ascribe the power of controlling the elements, of changing the seasons, and of restoring health; that they are persuaded of the immortality of the soul, and acknowledge a paradise and a hell." It is difficult to conceive how such opinions should prevail without some idea of a Deity.

In the voyages of some of our late navigators, we meet with facts which, (supposing them to be well ascertained,) are not easily explicable. Such are those mentioned by Cook and others concerning the religious opinions of the South Sea islanders. "From the rigid severity," says he, speaking of the inhabitants of the Friendly Islands, "with which some of their mourning and religious ceremonies are executed, one would expect to find that they meant thereby to secure felicity to themselves beyond the grave; but their principal object relates to things merely temporal; for they seem to have little conception of future punishment for faults committed in this life."

"The inhabitants of Otaheite," says Hawkesworth,[1] "believe

* [*Essays*, Vol. II.—The Natural History of Religion, sect. xv. at end.]

[1] *Voyages*, &c. Vol. II. p. 239.

the immortality of the soul, and that there are two situations after death somewhat analogous to our Heaven and Hell; but they do not suppose that their actions here in the least influence their future state." Dr. Douglas, the learned editor of Cook's last voyage, remarks how conformable to this is the belief of the inhabitants of the Ladrones or Marianne Isles, as described by Le Gobien.—"Ils sont persuadés de l'immortalité de l'âme. Ils reconnoissent même un paradis et un enfer dont ils se forment des idées assez bizarres. Ce n'est point, selon eux, la vertu ni le crime qui conduit dans ces lieux-là; les bonnes ou les mauvaises actions n'y servent de rien."

With respect to these assertions, I believe I might be justified in calling them in question in their full extent, for the reasons already mentioned; more particularly as I was assured by one of the most intelligent navigators of the present age,[1] (who, in the course of three voyages round the globe, had better opportunities than any other individual of studying the genius and character of the South Sea islanders,) that, after a residence of several months at Otaheite, in the last visit he paid to that island, he committed to the flames great part of the papers he had written soon after his arrival, and which he had imagined at the time contained very curious and accurate information, in consequence of the gross mistakes which a more perfect acquaintance with the language discovered to him in his narrative. The same gentleman added, that, although the language is extremely easily acquired, in so far as is necessary for the ordinary intercourse of a stranger with the natives, the case is widely different where the conversation turns on more general and abstract subjects.

Admitting, however, the fact to be as stated in the foregoing extracts, it is so plainly contrary to the general history of mankind, that I should not hesitate to ascribe it to the influence of artificial habits of thinking, superinduced by political institutions. The natural sentiments of a people must not always be judged of from their established creed, as this is often manufactured by priests and politicians,—an assertion for the proof

[1] Captain Bligh.

of which I need only refer to the doctrines taught by the Antinomian divines of England during the usurpation of Cromwell. Indeed, these doctrines were exactly similar in substance to those which excite our astonishment so much when we hear of them among the inhabitants of Otaheite or of the Ladrone islands, the object of both being avowedly to separate faith from morality, and to associate our ideas of merit and demerit with the observance or neglect of external rites and ceremonies.[1] It is against the same prejudice that these noble lines of *Persius* are directed.

> "Quin damus id Superis, de magnâ quod dare lance
> Non possit magni Messalæ lippa propago;
> COMPOSITUM JUS FASQUE ANIMO, SANCTOSQUE RECESSUS
> MENTIS, ET INCOCTUM GENEROSO PECTUS HONESTO:
> Hæc cedo ut admoveam templis, et farre litabo."*

That the *moral* feelings of the South Sea islanders ought not to be rashly inferred from the imperfect accounts of their religion given by Cook, his own testimony is sufficient to show. "The religious system," he observes in one place, "of the inhabitants of Otaheite is extensive, and in many instances singular; but few of the common people have a perfect knowledge of it, that being chiefly confined to the priests, who are pretty numerous." (December, 1777.) The traces of a political religion are discernible also in the account which he gives of the North Zealanders.

"This perpetual state of war, and destructive method of conducting it, operates so strongly in producing habitual circumspection, that one can hardly ever find a North Zealander off his guard either by night or by day. Indeed, no other man can have such powerful motives to be vigilant, as the preservation both of body and soul depends on it. For, according to their system of belief, the soul of the man whose flesh is devoured by the enemy is doomed to a perpetual fire, while the soul of the man whose body has been rescued from those

[1] It may perhaps be questioned if these doctrines be yet entirely abandoned by *all* the theologians of this island

* [Sat. ii. 71.]

who killed him, as well as the souls of all who died a natural death, ascend to the habitation of the gods."—In this creed we see evidently the hand of the political religionist; and accordingly, Cook adds to the passage just quoted—"Whatever the principles of this religion may be, of which we remain very ignorant, its instructions are very strongly inculcated into them from their very infancy." (February, 1777.) In its general spirit and tendency, it seems to bear a remarkable resemblance to that of the Druids, so nobly expressed by Mason in the last chorus of *Caractacus*, where, after painting the wretched condition of the cowardly and the servile, *Death* (who is the speaker) contrasts it with the happiness purchased by those who fall bravely in the field.

"—Not such the meed that crowns the sons of liberty.—
No, my Britons! Battle-slain
Rapture guilds your parting hour;
I, that all despotic reign,
Claim but there a moment's power.
Swiftly the soul of British flame
Animates some kindred frame;
Again to light and life triumphant flies;
Exults again in martial ecstasies,
Again for freedom fights, again for freedom dies."

Upon the whole, without entering into a minute discussion of the facts alleged by particular travellers, we may safely affirm that the doctrine of a future state and of a future retribution is sanctioned by the general voice of mankind, in whatever manner the principles of their nature may be modified by the place they occupy in the scale of civilisation. The refinement of their sentiments on the subject varies, indeed, with the cultivation which their faculties have received; but in no state of society are they altogether deprived of those hopes of futurity which lighten the pressure of their present sufferings. That these hopes originate partly in the infirmities and prejudices of men, affords no presumption whatever against the reality of the objects towards which they are directed; for here, as in many other instances, the tendency of our prejudices coincides with the conclusions of an enlightened reason; and affords to those who enjoy the

comprehensive views of the universe which philosophy opens, an additional ground of gratitude to that Providence which, as in the case of the individual, it guards his animal existence by means of implanted instincts in the infancy of human reason, so in the case of society, it often anticipates the conclusions of philosophy by prejudices inspired by our weaknesses and necessities. In this instance, however, it is not prejudice alone that leads the unenlightened savage to the truth, but the influence also of those moral considerations already illustrated, some of which are no less obvious and impressive to the rude and ignorant mind, than to those whose understandings have been illuminated, and whose feelings have been refined by science.

Of the two great principles of natural religion, the belief of a Deity and of a future state, it is remarkable that the latter seems to be still more inseparable from our constitution than the former,—a fact which coincides with a remark already made, that even absolute atheism does not exclude the possibility of our existing hereafter. Dr. Robertson,* who admits that "several tribes have been discovered in America which have no idea whatever of a Supreme Being, and no rites of religious worship," asserts, "that the belief of a future existence may be traced from one extremity of America to the other; in some regions more faint and obscure, in others more perfectly developed, but nowhere unknown. The most uncivilized of its savage tribes do not apprehend death as the extinction of being. All hope for a future and more happy state, where they shall be for ever exempt from the calamities which embitter human life in its present condition."—"The human mind," says the same eloquent and philosophical historian, "even when least improved and invigorated by culture, shrinks from the thoughts of dissolution, and looks forward with hope and expectation to a future existence. This sentiment, resulting from a secret consciousness of its own dignity, from an instinctive longing after immortality, is universal, and may be deemed natural. Upon this are founded the most exalted hopes of man in his highest state of improvement; nor has nature withheld from him this

* [*History of America.*]

soothing consolation in the most early and rude period of his progress."

I have now stated pretty fully the principal evidences which the light of nature affords in proof of a future state. Of the different considerations I have mentioned, there is perhaps not one which, taken singly, would be sufficient to establish this important truth; but taken in conjunction, their united force appears to me far to outweigh all the metaphysical doubts and difficulties which have been started on the other side of the question. They not only all terminate in the same conclusion, but they mutually reflect light on each other; and have all that sort of consistency and connexion among themselves, which could hardly be supposed to take place among a series of false propositions. "Truth," as Mr. Hume* has remarked, "is *one thing*, but errors are numberless, and every man has a different one." When we find, therefore, a variety of conclusions, to which we have been led by separate and independent processes of reasoning, to be all consistent with each other, this furnishes a strong presumption that all these conclusions are true.

The same remark may be extended to the other principles of natural religion. They all hang together in such a manner, that, if any one of them be granted, it facilitates the way for the reception of all the rest. Admit, for example, the *existence* of the Deity,—his wisdom, justice, and goodness, (all of which considerations conspire powerfully in strengthening the presumption for a future state,) may almost be said to follow as corollaries from the very idea of a God;—and, on the other hand, our instinctive desire of immortality, with all the hopes and fears connected with it; our speculations concerning the nature of the soul; and a great variety of other inquiries, continually lead the thoughts to that invisible Being who is the great source of existence and the Supreme Arbiter of happiness and misery.

It may not be improper to repeat once more in this last stage of our argument, that, although the belief of a God strengthens greatly the presumption for a future state, yet it

* [After many others.]

would not necessarily follow, on the supposition of atheism, that a future state is impossible. The same *chance*, or the same *necessity* which brought us into this world, *may* carry us into another. Nay, a variety of considerations might be alleged to show that this supposition was more *probable* than the contrary one. The principal effect that the atheistic scheme would produce on the future prospects of a man who reasoned consequentially from it would be to fill his mind with uncertainty and alarm about his future destination, by leading him to consider himself as the victim of blind and unintelligent causes. Dr. Butler was, I believe, the first who made this observation with respect to the possibility of a future state on the supposition of atheism;* and it has been repeated by M. Necker in his *Treatise on the Importance of Religious Opinions.* "How happens it," says this ingenious and eloquent writer, "that some pretend that atheism frees us from every kind of terror about futurity? I cannot perceive that such a conclusion follows from this fatal system. A God such as my heart delineates encourages and moderates all my feelings. I say to myself he is good and indulgent. He knows our weaknesses, he loves to produce happiness, and I see the advances of death with confidence and hope. But every fear would become reasonable if I lived under the dominion of an invisible nature whose revolutions and laws are unknown. I seek for some means to escape from its power, but even death cannot afford me a retreat, or space an asylum. A blind nature surrounds me and governs me imperiously. I in vain demand what is to be done with me: It is deaf to my voice. Devoid of thought, will, and feeling, it is governed by an irresistible force, whose action is a mystery never to be unfolded. What a fatal blow to my happiness to abandon all my ideas of infinite wisdom, justice, and goodness; to believe that the universe is without a Father and Governor, and that there is no power in nature that I can invoke as a protector! Were I even to apprehend that my prospects terminated here, I should be less unhappy if it was to a parent and a benefactor that I resigned my being.

* [*Analogy*, Part I. chaps. i.–iii.]

This last communication with him would mitigate my sufferings. My eyes when closing would perceive his power. I might still hope that God remained with those I loved; and find some comfort in the thought, that my destiny was united with his will, and that the incomprehensible darkness I was going to plunge into is equally a part of his empire."

Nor is it merely with *each other* that the principles of natural religion are connected. They have a relation to all the other principles of moral philosophy; insomuch, that a person who entertains just views of the one, never fails to entertain also just views of the other. Indeed, I do not think that I should go too far were I to assert that they have a relation to almost all the truths we know, whether in the moral, the intellectual, or the material worlds. One thing is certain, that, in proportion as our knowledge extends, our doubts and objections disappear; new light is continually breaking in upon us from every quarter, and more of order and system appear in the universe. It is chiefly from partial and limited views of nature that scepticism arises, not only as these views suggest to us objections which would vanish upon a more enlarged acquaintance with the subject, but as they withdraw the attention from those comprehensive and sublime prospects of the universe which impress the mind with an irresistible conviction of wise and beneficent design. A natural philosopher, for example, who confines his attention to a particular problem in physical astronomy, is much less likely to be struck with the marks of Divine contrivance than if he were to attend to the solar system in general, and to study the mutual relations of its different parts. This is probably one cause of the difference between the character of some late mathematicians on the continent and that of their predecessors, that the latter had exhausted the grandest views of the universe, and left to their successors only the study of it in detail. A philosopher who (like Bacon) extends his inquiries to all the different branches of science, is still less in danger of scepticism than if he were to confine himself to the study of *physics;* and in general the more we know the more we perceive of order and system in the universe,

and the more satisfied do we feel ourselves with the condition and the prospects of man.

It is a strong confirmation of these observations that almost all the great discoveries, both in moral and physical science, have been made by men friendly to the principles of religion; and that those writers who have affected to be sceptical on this last subject, have in general been paradoxical and sophistical in all their other scientific inquiries. This not only shows the connexion which subsists between the different truths which are placed within our reach, but proves that it is to a mind well fitted for the discovery and reception of truth in general that the evidences of religion appear the most satisfactory. When an author, for example, who affects to be sceptical about the Divine existence, is also found in the course of his speculations to doubt of his own and about the certainty of mathematical science, it must go far to weaken his authority as a guide in philosophy. Of the competency of the human faculties to attain truth on the most abstruse subjects, we have an experimental proof in the unerring certainty with which we are able to predict the phenomena of the heavens many centuries before they are to happen. And why should we doubt the clear conclusions of our reason in those other inquiries, where, from their nature, we have not at present the same opportunity of verifying them by the fact? One thing I may venture to affirm, that, had we not this sensible and palpable confirmation of the certainty of mathematical and astronomical science, it would be difficult to vindicate against the charge of presumption those men who pretend to decide with confidence concerning a part of the universe, apparently so far removed from the examination of our faculties.

Now, surely it is no inconsiderable presumption against the reasonableness of a sceptical disposition in religion, that it misleads us also in the other sciences, and, I may add, unfits us for the business of life; whereas just views of religion teach us to think favourably of the human faculties, and both animate and direct us in the search of truth, in whatever inquiries we may happen to engage.

Consider, too, in what state of mind men are chiefly disposed to be sceptical. Is it not when oppressed with low spirits, and when out of humour with themselves and with the world? On the contrary, it is in the most healthful condition of the soul, when external nature smiles around us, when all our faculties are vigorous and active, when we are satisfied with ourselves, and engaged in the service of mankind, that we feel the most sensibly our relation to another state of existence, and, without any long process of reasoning, become as it were *conscious* of the indissoluble and eternal union between happiness and virtue. Perhaps this circumstance by itself would not prove much, but added to those already mentioned, it seems to me to have some weight.

The happy influence which the belief of a future state has on the conduct and the enjoyments of mankind also tends to confirm its credibility. This is so remarkable that it has led some to consider it merely as an invention of *politicians* to preserve the good order of society, and to increase the happiness of human life. But if it be allowed that it *has* this tendency, can it be supposed that the Author of the universe should have left the order and happiness of social life to depend on the belief of a mere chimera, which was in time to vanish before the light of philosophy? Is it not more probable that the enlargement of our knowledge, to which we are so powerfully prompted by the principle of curiosity, will tend to increase, and not to diminish the virtue and the happiness of mankind; and instead of spreading a gloom over nature, and extinguishing the hopes which nature inspires, will gradually unfold to us in the moral world the same order and beauty we admire in the material?

After all that I have urged in proof of a future state, I must again repeat (and the same remark may be extended to the proofs of religion in general) that the evidence which the light of reason affords on the subject is only *moral* or *probable*, and by no means of a *demonstrative* nature. But what is the evidence on which we every day act in life? Precisely of the same kind, and often very inferior in degree to that which results from the foregoing considerations. "It ought," says Dr. Butler, "to be

forced upon the reflection of sceptical persons, that such is our nature and condition, that they necessarily require us, in the daily course of life, to act upon evidence much lower than what is commonly called probable; and that there are numberless instances respecting the common pursuits of life where a man would be thought in a literal sense distracted, who would not act, and with great application too, not only on an even chance, but on much less, and where the probability was greatly against his succeeding."*

It may perhaps be asked why the evidences of a future state were not made more striking and indubitable; why human reason was left so much in the dark on a subject so interesting to our happiness; and why even that Revelation which has brought life and immortality to light, has not afforded us a clearer view of the occupations and enjoyments of futurity. To these questions it would be presumptuous to attempt a direct reply. But surely we may be permitted to observe, that the evidences of a future state may be easily conceived to have been so irresistibly strong, and the prospect of our future destination so clearly presented to our view, that the world would no longer have answered the purpose of a state of probation; nor would the business of life have afforded any object of sufficient magnitude to interest our passions, and call forth our actions.

> "A sense of higher life would only damp
> The school-boy's task, and spoil his playful hours:
> Nor could the child of reason, feeble man,
> With vigour through this infant being drudge,
> Did brighter worlds their unimagined bliss
> Disclosing, dazzle and dissolve his mind."[1]

This idea is illustrated with his usual taste and judgment, and with somewhat more than his usual originality of thought, by Dr. Blair, in his discourse on our imperfect knowledge of a future state; and it has been placed in a singularly happy point of view by Bernardin de St. Pierre, in his ingenious and eloquent work, entitled *Studies of Nature*.

* [*Analogy*, Introduction.] [1]

[1] Thomson's *Liberty*, [Part iii. 565.]

"I recollect," says M. de St. Pierre, "that, on my return to France in a vessel which had been on a voyage to India, as soon as the sailors had perfectly distinguished the land of their native country, they became in a great measure incapable of attending to the business of the ship. Some looked at it wistfully without the power of minding any other object; others dressed themselves in their best clothes, as if they had been going that moment to disembark; some talked to themselves, and others wept. As we approached, the disorder of their minds increased. As they had been absent several years, there was no end to their admiration of the verdure of the hills, of the foliage of the trees, and even of the rocks which skirted the shore covered over with seaweed and mosses. The church spires of the villages where they were born, which they distinguished at a distance up the country, and which they named one after another, filled them with transports of delight. But when the vessel entered the port, and when they saw on the quays their friends, their fathers, their mothers, their wives, and their children stretching out their arms to them with tears of joy, and calling them by their names, it was no longer possible to retain a single man on board. They all sprang ashore, and it became necessary, according to the custom of the port, to employ another set of mariners to bring the vessel to her moorings.

"What then would be the case were we indulged with a sensible discovery of those regions inhabited by those who are most dear to us, and who alone are worthy of our most sublime affections? All the laborious and vain solicitudes of a present life would come to an end. The exit from this world to the other being in every man's power, the gulf would be quickly shot; but nature has involved it in obscurity, and has planted doubt and apprehension to guard the passage."*

* [Herewith terminates "*The Preliminary Inquiry into the Principles of Natural Religion.*"]

[CHAPTER V.

CONCLUSION OF BOOK THIRD.—WHY LITTLE NEED BE ADDED CONCERNING THE DUTIES WHICH RESPECT THE DEITY.]

After the view which has been given of the principles of Natural Religion, little remains to be added concerning the Duties which respect the Deity. To employ our faculties in studying those evidences of power, of wisdom, and of goodness which he has displayed in his works, as it is the foundation in other instances of our sense of religious obligation, so it is in itself a duty incumbent on us as reasonable and moral beings, capable of recognising the existence of an Almighty Cause, and of feeling corresponding sentiments of devotion. By those who entertain just opinions on this subject, the following practical consequences, which comprehend some of the chief effects of religion on the temper and conduct, will be readily admitted as self-evident propositions.

In the *first* place, if the Deity be possessed of infinite moral excellence, we must feel towards him, in an infinite degree, all those affections of love, gratitude, and confidence, which are excited by the imperfect worth we observe among our fellow-creatures; for it is by conceiving all that is benevolent and amiable in man raised to the highest perfection that we can alone form some faint notion of the Divine Nature. To cultivate, therefore, an habitual love and reverence of the Supreme Being, may be justly considered as the first great branch of morality; nor is the virtue of that man complete, or even consistent with itself, in whose mind those sentiments of piety are wanting.

Piety seems to be considered by Mr. Smith* as founded in some degree on those principles of our nature which connect us

* [*Theory of Moral Sentiments*, Part III. chap. v. sixth edition; in the older editions, chap. iii.]

with our fellow-creatures. The dejection of mind which accompanies a state of complete solitude; the disposition we have to impart to others our thoughts and feelings; the desire we have of other intelligent and moral natures to sympathize with our own,—all lead us, in the progress of reason and of moral perception, to establish gradually a mental intercourse with the Invisible Witness and Judge of our Conduct. An habitual sense of the Divine presence comes at last to be formed. In every object or event that we see we trace the hand of the Almighty, and in the suggestions of reason and conscience we listen to his inspirations. In this intercourse of the heart with God, (an intercourse which enlivens and gladdens the most desolate scenes, and which dignifies the duties of the meanest station,) the supreme felicity of our nature is to be found; and till it is firmly established there remains a void in every breast which nothing earthly can supply;—a consideration which proves that religion has a foundation in the original principles of our constitution, while it affords us a presage of that immortal happiness which Providence has destined to be the reward of virtue.

Secondly, Although religion can with no propriety be considered as the sole foundation of morality, yet, when we are convinced that God is infinitely good, and that he is the friend and protector of virtue, this belief affords the most powerful inducements to the practice of every branch of our duty. It leads us to consider conscience as the vicegerent of God, and to attend to its suggestions as to the commands of that Being from whom we have received our existence, and the great object of whose government is to promote the happiness and the perfection of his whole creation.

These considerations not only are addressed to our gratitude, but awaken in the mind a sentiment of universal benevolence, and make us feel a relation to every part of the universe. In doing our duty we conceive ourselves as fellow-workers with the Deity, and as willing instruments in his hands for promoting the benevolent purposes of his administration. This is that sublime sentiment of piety and benevolence which we

meet with so often in the writings of the ancient Stoics. "Shall any one," says Antoninus, "say, *Oh beloved city of Cecrops!* and wilt not thou say, *Oh beloved city of God?*"*

In this manner it appears that a sense of religion is favourable to the practice of virtue in *two* respects; *first*, by leading us to consider every act of duty as an expression of gratitude to God; and, *secondly*, as leading us to regard ourselves as parts of that universal system of which he is the Author and Governor. There is another respect in which it is calculated to influence our conduct very powerfully, as it is addressed to our *hopes* and *fears*. In this view religion is a species of authoritative *law* enforced by the most awful sanctions, and of which it is impossible for us by any art to elude the penalties. In the case of the lower orders of men, who are incapable of abstract speculation, and whose moral feelings cannot be supposed to have received much cultivation, it is chiefly this view of religion, as addressed to their *hopes* and *fears*, that secures a faithful discharge of their duties as members of society. In vain would the civil magistrate attempt to preserve the order of society by annexing the penalty of death to heinous offences, if men in general apprehended that there was nothing to be feared beyond the grave. And it is of importance to remark, that this observation applies with peculiar force to the lower orders, who have commonly much less attachment to life than their superiors. Of this truth all wise legislators, both ancient and modern, have been aware, and have seen the necessity of maintaining a sense of religion among their fellow-citizens as the most powerful of all supports to the political order. "Ut aliqua in vita formido improbis esset posita, apud inferos ejusmodi quædam illi antiqui supplicia impiis constituta esse voluerunt; quod videlicet intelligebant, his remotis, non esse mortem ipsam pertimescendam."[1] They, on the other hand,

* [*De Rebus Suis*, Lib. IV. § xxiii.]

[1] Cicero, *Catilinaria*, iv.

With these views it is not surprising that some of the wisest of the heathen writers should have expressed themselves so very strongly concerning the guilt incurred by those who, by exposing to ridicule the fabulous mythology which formed the popular creed among their contemporaries, endangered the authority of those moral principles which were identified with it in the

who have laboured to loosen the bands of society, have found it necessary to begin with perverting or destroying the natural sentiments of the mind with respect to a future retribution. In ages where the religious principles of the multitude were too firmly rivetted to be entirely eradicated, they have inculcated theological dogmas subversive of moral distinctions, as in the case of the Antinomian teachers during our own civil wars. In other and more recent instances they have avowedly attempted to establish a system of Atheism. So true is the old observation, that the extremes of superstition and of infidelity unite in their tendency; and so completely verified are *now* the apprehensions which were expressed eighty years ago by Bishop Butler, that the spirit of irreligion, (which in his time was beginning to grow fashionable among the higher ranks,) might produce some time or other political disorders similar to those which arose from religious fanaticism in the preceding century.[1]

A prediction by a later writer of genius and discernment, and one well acquainted with the principles and manners of the world, is not unworthy of attention in the present times, in which we have seen it very remarkably verified in numberless

vulgar belief. There is good reason for thinking that the secret communicated to the initiated in the Eleusinian mysteries was the unity of God;* a truth too sublime to be disclosed at once to the uninformed multitude, as it struck at the root of all those fables which were incorporated with their habits of thinking and feeling on the most important subjects. On this supposition we have a satisfactory explanation of a noted passage in Horace, between which and the preceding lines it seems not easy at first to trace any connexion.

"Est et fideli tuta silentio
Merces. Vetabo, qui Cereris sacrum
Vulgarit arcanæ, sub iisdem
Sit trabibus, fragilemque mecum
Solvat phaselum."
Carm. Lib. III. Ode ii.

The transition to these lines from the foregoing ones is certainly by no means obvious.

"Virtus, recludens immeritis mori
Cælum, negatâ tentat iter viâ;
Cœtusque vulgares et udam
Spernit humum fugiente pennâ.
Est et fideli," &c. &c. &c.

[1] "*Is* there no danger that all this may raise somewhat like the levelling spirit upon atheistical principles which, in the last age, prevailed upon enthusiastic ones? Not to speak of the possibility that different sorts of people may unite in it upon these contrary principles?"—*Sermon preached before the House of Lords, January* 30, 1740.

* Warburton's *Divine Legation of Moses.* [Barthélemy's] *Voyage du jeune Anacharsis.*

instances. "I shall say nothing at present of the lower ranks of mankind. Though they have not yet got into the fashion of laughing at religion, and treating it with scorn and contempt, and I believe are too serious a set of creatures ever to come into it, yet we are not to imagine but that the contempt it is held in by those whose examples they are too apt to imitate, will in time utterly shake their principles, and render them, if not as profane, at least as corrupt as their betters. When this event happens, and we begin to feel the effects of it in our dealings with them, *those who have done the mischief* will find the necessity at last of turning religious in their own defence, and (for want of a better principle) to set an example of piety and good morals for their own interest and convenience."[1]

Nor is it merely in restraining men from grosser outrages that a sense of religion operates as a compulsory law. Without a secret impression (of which it is impossible that the human mind can divest itself) that there is at all times an invisible witness of our thoughts, it is probable that the virtue of the best of men would often yield to temptation. Even amidst the darkness of the heathen world Xenophon had recourse to this impression, to account for the inflexible integrity of Socrates, when he sat as one of the judges in the celebrated trial of the naval commanders. "Having taken," says Xenophon, "as was customary, the senatorial oath, by which he bound himself to act in all things conformably to the laws, and arriving in his turn to be president of the assembly of the people, he boldly refused to give his suffrage to the iniquitous sentence which condemned the nine captains, being neither intimidated by the menaces of the great, nor the fury of the people, but steadily preferring the sanctity of an oath to the safety of his person. For he was persuaded the gods watched over the affairs of men in a way altogether different from what the vulgar imagined; for while *these* limited their knowledge to *some* particulars only, Socrates, on the contrary, extended it to all, firmly persuaded that they are everywhere present, and

[1] Sterne's *Sermons*.

that every word, every action, nay, even our most retired deliberations were open to their view."*

In the [*third* and] last place, a sense of religion, where it is sincere, will necessarily be attended with a complete resignation of our own will to that of the Deity, as it teaches us to regard every event, even the most afflicting, as calculated to promote beneficent purposes, which we are unable to comprehend, and to promote, finally, the perfection and happiness of our own nature. This is the best, and indeed the only rational foundation of fortitude. Nay, it may be safely affirmed, (as Socrates long ago observed in the *Phœdon* of Plato, [§ xv. Wyttenbach; § 36, Bekker, &c.]) that whoever founds his fortitude on anything else *is only valiant through fear.* In other words, he exposes himself to danger, merely from a regard to the opinion of others, and of consequence wants that internal principle of heroism which can alone arm the mind with patience under those misfortunes which it is condemned to bear in solitude, or under sorrows which prudence conceals from the public eye. But to the man who believes that everything is ordered for the best, and that his existence and happiness are in the hands of a Being who watches over him with the care of a parent, the difficulties and dangers of life only serve to call forth the latent powers of the soul, by reminding him of the prize for which he combats, and of that beneficent Providence by which the conflict was appointed.

> "Safe in the hands of one disposing Power,
> Or in the natal or the mortal hour."†

The view which I have given of *Religion* as forming the *first and chief branch of Moral Duty*, and as contributing in its turn most powerfully to promote the practice of every virtue, is equally consonant to the spirit of the Sacred Writings, and to the most obvious dictates of reason and conscience; and accordingly it is sanctioned by the authority of all those philosophers of antiquity who devoted their talents to the improvement and happiness of mankind. "It should never be

* [*Memorabilia*, Lib. I. cap. i. §§ 18, 19.]

† [Pope, *Essay on Man*, Ep. i. 287.]

thought," says Plato in one of his Dialogues, "that there is any branch of human virtue of greater importance than piety towards the Deity."* The chief article of the *Unwritten Law* mentioned by Socrates[1] is, "that the gods ought to be worshipped."—"This," he says, "is acknowledged everywhere, and received by all men as the first command." And to the same purpose Cicero, in the first book of his *Offices*, places in the first rank of duties those we owe to the Immortal Gods. "In ipsa communitate sunt gradus officiorum ex quibus, quid cuique præstet, intelligi possit: ut prima Diis immortalibus; secunda patriæ; tertia parentibus; deinceps gradatim reliquis debeantur."[2]

The elevation of mind which some of the most illustrious characters of antiquity derived from their religious principles, however imperfect and erroneous, and the weight which these principles gave them in their public and political capacity, are remarked by many ancient writers; and such, I apprehend, will be always found to be the case when the personal importance of the individual rests on the basis of public opinion. "But he," says Plutarch, "who was most conversant with Pericles, and most contributed to give him a grandeur of mind, and to make his high spirit for governing the popular assemblies more weighty and authoritative; in a word, who exalted his ideas and raised at the same time the dignity of his demeanour: The person who did this was Anaxagoras the Clazomenian, whom the people of that age reverenced as the first who made *Mind* or *Intellect* (in opposition to *Chance*) a principle in the formation and government of the universe."†

The extraordinary respect which the Romans, during their period of greatest glory, entertained for religion, (false as their own system was in its mythological foundations, and erroneous in many of its practical tendencies,) has been often taken notice of as one of the principal sources of their private and public

* [*Epinomis*, § 11.]

[1] Xenophon, *Memor.* Lib. IV. cap. iv.

[2] Cap. ult.

† [In Pericle; *Opera*, Tom. I. p. 154, editiones Xylandri. Not literally translated: Plutarch says, that Anaxagoras *was called* Νοῦς, &c.]

virtues. "The Spaniards," says Cicero, "exceed us in numbers; the Gauls in the glory of war; but we surpass all nations in that wisdom by which we have learned that all things are governed and directed by the immortal gods."[1]

In the later periods of their history, this reverence for religion, together with the other virtues which gave them the empire of the world, was in a great measure lost; and we continually find their orators and historians drawing a melancholy contrast between the degeneracy of their manners and those of their ancestors. In the account which Livy has given of the consulate of Q. Cincinnatus, he mentions an attempt which the tribunes made to persuade the people that they were not bound by their military oath to follow the Consul to the field, because they had taken that oath when he was a private man. But, however agreeable this doctrine might be to their inclinations, and however strongly recommended to them by the sanction of their own popular magistrates, we find that their reverence for the religion of an oath led them to treat the doctrine as nothing better than a cavil. Livy's reflection on this occasion is remarkable: "Nondum hæc, quæ nunc tenet seculum, negligentia Deûm venerat: nec interpretando sibi quisque jusjurandum leges aptas faciebat, sed suos potius mores ad ea accommodabat."[2]

How completely the sense of religion was afterwards extinguished among the same people, and how intimately *this* change in their character was connected with that political profligacy which ended in the ruin of the commonwealth, may be collected from many passages in the writings of Cicero. "Nunquam audivi in Epicuri Schola Lycurgum, Solonem, Miltiadem, Themistoclem, Epaminondam, nominari; qui in ore sunt ceterorum omnium philosophorum."[3] In his own times, he tells us, "that the portrait of Epicurus was not only a common article of furniture in their *houses*, but that it formed a common

[1] "Sed pietate ac religione, atque hac una sapientia, quod Deorum immortalium numine omnia regi gubernarique perspeximus, omnes gentes nationesque superavimus."—Oratio *De Haruspicum Responsis*, cap. ix.

[2] *Hist.* Lib. III. cap. xx.

[3] *De Fin.* Lib. II. cap. xxi.

ornament to their rings and vases."—"Nec tamen Epicuri licet oblivisci, si cupiam: cujus imaginem non modo in tabulis nostri familiares, sed etiam in poculis et in annulis habent."[1]

A review of the political conduct of the distinguished men who appeared at this period, and a comparison of the parts which they acted with the philosophical principles they professed, furnishes an instructive comment on these observations; and goes far to warrant the general inference, that wherever the same pernicious philosophy extends its influence widely among the great body of a people, men are unfitted to enjoy the blessings of rational freedom, and are prepared either to run into the excesses of democratical anarchy, or (what is the natural and inevitable consequences of such excesses) to submit quietly to the yoke of a despotic master.

This last observation I shall have occasion to illustrate afterwards, when I come to contrast the practical tendency of the school of Epicurus with that of Zeno.

[1] Ibid. Lib. V. cap. ii.

BOOK FOURTH.

[OF OUR DUTIES TO MEN; TO WIT, THOSE WHICH RESPECT OUR FELLOW-CREATURES, AND THOSE WHICH RESPECT OURSELVES.]

[PART I.]—OF THE DUTIES WHICH RESPECT OUR FELLOW-CREATURES.

UNDER this title it is not proposed to give a complete enumeration of our social duties, but only to point out some of the most important, chiefly with a view to show the imperfections of those systems of morals which attempt to resolve the whole of virtue into one particular principle. Among these, that which resolves Virtue into Benevolence is undoubtedly the most amiable; but even this system will appear, from the following remarks, to be not only inconsistent with truth, but to lead to dangerous consequences.

CHAPTER I.

OF BENEVOLENCE.

Beneficence is so important a branch of virtue, that it has been supposed by some moralists to constitute the whole of it. According to these writers, good-will to mankind is the only *immediate* object of moral approbation; and the obligation of all our other moral duties arises entirely from their apprehended tendency to promote the happiness of society.

Among the most eminent partisans of this system in modern times, Mr. Smith mentions particularly Dr. Ralph Cudworth,

Dr. Henry More, and Mr. John Smith of Cambridge; "but of all its patrons," he observes, "ancient or modern, Dr. Francis Hutcheson was undoubtedly beyond all comparison the most acute, the most distinct, the most philosophical, and, what is of the greatest consequence of all, the soberest and most judicious."[1]

In favour of this system Mr. Smith acknowledges that there are many appearances in human nature which at first sight seem strongly to support it, and of some of these appearances Dr. Hutcheson avails himself with much acuteness and plausibility. 1*st*, Whenever in any action, supposed to proceed from benevolent affections, some other motive is discovered, our sense of the merit of this action is just so far diminished as this motive is believed to have influenced it. 2*d*, When those actions, on the contrary, which are commonly supposed to proceed from a selfish motive are discovered to have arisen from a benevolent one, it generally enhances our sense of their merit. Lastly, it was urged by Dr. Hutcheson, that in all casuistical disputes concerning the rectitude of conduct, the ultimate appeal is uniformly made to utility. In the later debates, for example, about passive obedience and the right of resistance, the sole point in controversy among men of sense was, whether universal submission would probably be attended with greater evils than temporary insurrections when privileges were invaded. Whether what, upon the whole, tended most to the happiness of mankind was not also morally good, was never once made a question.

Since Benevolence, therefore, was the only motive which could bestow upon any action the character of virtue, the greater the benevolence which was evidenced by any action, the greater the praise which must belong to it.

In directing all our actions to promote the greatest possible good,—in submitting all inferior affections to the desire of the general happiness of mankind,—in regarding one's-self as but one of the many whose prosperity was to be pursued no farther than it was consistent with, or conducive to that of the whole, consisted the perfection of virtue.

[1] *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, Part VII. sect. ii. [chap. 3, Vol. ii. p. 286,] sixth edit. [In the older editions, Part VI. sect. ii. chap. 3.]

Dr. Hutcheson held farther, that Self-love was a principle which could never be virtuous in any degree or in any direction. This maxim he carried so far as to assert, that even a regard to the pleasure of self-approbation, to the comfortable applauses of our own consciences, diminishes the merit of a benevolent action. "In the common judgments of mankind, however," says Mr. Smith, "this regard to the approbation of our own minds is so far from being considered as what can, in any respect, diminish the virtue of any action, that it is rather looked upon as the sole motive which deserves the appellation of virtuous."*

Of the truth and correctness of these principles Dr. Hutcheson was so fully convinced, that, in conformity to them, he has offered some algebraical formulas for computing mathematically the morality of actions. Of this very extraordinary attempt, the following axioms, which he premises to his formulas, may serve as a sufficient specimen.

1. The *moral importance* of any agent, or the quantity of public good produced by him, is in a compound ratio of his benevolence and abilities, or M (moment of good) $= B \times A$.

2. In like manner, the moment of private good or interest produced by any person to himself is in a compound ratio of his self-love and ability, or $I = S \times A$.

3. When, in comparing the virtue of two agents, the abilities are equal, the moment of public good produced by them in like circumstances, is as the benevolence, or $M = B \times 1$.

4. When benevolence in two agents is equal, and other circumstances alike, the moment of public good is as the abilities, or $M = A \times 1$.

5. The virtue, then, of agents, or their benevolence, is always directly as the moment of good produced in like circumstances, and inversely as their abilities, or $B = \frac{M}{A}$.

As Dr. Hutcheson's example in the use of these formulas has not been followed by any of his successors, it is unnecessary to employ any arguments to expose the absurdity of this unsuc-

* [*Theory of Moral Sentiments*, Part VII. sect. ii. chap. 3, Vol. II. p. 293, sixth edition. In the older editions, Part VI. sect. ii. chap. 3.]

cessful innovation in the usual language of Ethics.[1] It is of more consequence to direct our attention to the substance of the doctrine which it was the great object of the ingenious author to establish.

And, in the first place, the necessary and obvious consequences to which this account of virtue leads, seem to furnish a satisfactory proof of its unsoundness. For if the merit of an action depends on no other circumstance than the quantity of good intended by the agent, then the rectitude of an action can in no case be influenced by the mutual relations of the parties; a conclusion contradicted by the universal judgment of mankind in favour of the paramount obligation of various other duties. It is sufficient to mention the obligations of gratitude, of veracity, and of justice.[2] Unless we admit these duties to be *immediately* obligatory, we must admit the maxim, that a good end may sanctify any means necessary for its attainment; or, in other words, that it would be lawful for us to dispense with the obligations of veracity and justice whenever, by doing so, we had a prospect of promoting any of the essential interests of society.

With respect to this maxim I would only ask, is it probable *a priori*, that the Wise and Beneficent Author of the Universe should have left the conduct of such a fallible and short-sighted creature as man to be regulated by no other principle than the private opinion of each individual with respect to the expediency of his actions? Or, in other words, by the conjectures which the individual might form on the good or evil resulting, *on the whole*, from an endless train of future contingencies? Were this the case, the opinions of mankind concerning the rules of morality would be as various as their judgments con-

[1] [See *An Inquiry into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue.* Treatise II. sect. iii. p. 183, *seq.*; second edition, 1726.]—Dr. Hutcheson's attempt to introduce the language of mathematics into morals gave occasion to a valuable Essay on *Proper and Improper Quantity*, by the late Dr. Reid. This Essay may be found in the *Philosophical Transactions* of the Royal Society of London for the year 1748, [and in his *Collected Works*, p. 715, *seq.*]

[2] See Butler's *Essay on the Nature of Virtue*, at the end of his *Analogy*.

cerning the probable issue of the most doubtful and difficult determination in politics. Numberless cases might be fancied in which a person would not only *claim* merit to himself, but actually possess it, in consequence of actions which are generally regarded with indignation and abhorrence. Even men of the soundest judgment and most penetrating sagacity might frequently be led to the perpetration of enormities, if they had no other standard of right and wrong but what they derived from their own uncertain anticipations of futurity. And when we consider how small the number of such men is, in comparison of those whose understandings are perverted by the prejudices of education, and by their own selfish passions, it is easy to see what a scene of anarchy the world would become. Surely if the Deity intended the happiness of his creatures, he would not build the *order* (I may say the *existence*) of society on so precarious a foundation. And here it deserves particularly to be mentioned, that one of the arguments commonly produced in support of the scheme is drawn from the benevolence of God. Benevolence, we are told, induced the Deity to call the universe into existence, and benevolence is the great law of his government: and as virtue in man must consist in conformity to the will of God, in imitating his moral perfections to the utmost of our power, it is concluded that virtue and benevolence are the same. But the premises here lead to a conclusion directly opposite; for if the happiness of mankind be the great end for which they are brought into being, it is presumable that the rules of their conduct are of such a nature as to be obvious to the capacities of all men of sincere and well-disposed minds. Accordingly we find, (and the fact is in a peculiar degree worthy of attention,) that while the theory of Ethics involves some of the most abstruse questions which have ever employed the human faculties, the moral judgments and moral feelings of the most distant ages and nations, with respect to all the most essential duties of life, are one and the same.[1]

The reasonableness of the foregoing conclusion will be much

[1] "Si quid rectissimum sit quærimus, perspicuum est. Si quid maximè expediat, obscurum."—Cicero, *Epist. ad Fam.* IV. ii.

confirmed if we consider how much the happiness of mankind is often left to depend on the will of one or of a few individuals. The best men in such circumstances, when invested with absolute power, might be rendered curses to the world by sanguine plans of beneficence; and the ambitious and designing would be supplied with specious pretences to justify the most cruel and tyrannical measures. In truth, it is this very plea of benevolent intention which has been employed to palliate, or rather to sanctify, the conduct of the greatest scourges of the human race. It is this very plea which in former times lighted up the fires of the Inquisition; and which in our own age has furnished a pretence for outrages against all the principles of justice and all the feelings of humanity.

These arguments are urged with great ingenuity, and with irresistible force of reasoning, by Mr. Gisborne, in his remarks on Dr. Paley's scheme of morals.

It may perhaps be urged that a regard to Utility would lead to an *invariable* adherence to the rules of veracity, gratitude, and justice; because in this way more good is produced on the whole than could be obtained by any occasional deviations from them; that it is this idea of utility which first leads us to approve of these virtues; and that afterwards habit, or the association of ideas, makes us observe their rules without thinking of consequences. But is not this to adopt that mode of reasoning which Hutcheson censures so severely in the selfish philosophers?* According to them we labour to promote the public prosperity, because we believe our own to be intimately connected with it. They acknowledge, at the same time, that we often make a real sacrifice of private to public advantage, and that we often exert ourselves in the public service without once thinking of our own interest. But all this they explain by habits and associations, which operate in this case as they do in the case of the miser, who, although his attachment to

* [See *Inquiry*, &c., Treatise II. *Concerning Moral Good and Evil*, Sects. i. ii.;—also *An Essay on the Passions and Affections, with Illustrations on the Moral Sense*;—his Latin Text Book, *Philosophiæ Moralis Institutio compendiaria*; and his posthumous *System of Moral Philosophy*.]

money was originally founded on the consideration of its uses, yet continues to accumulate wealth without once thinking of the ends to which it is subservient, and indeed long after he is able to enjoy those comforts which it can purchase.

Now the fallaciousness of this mode of reasoning has been pointed out by Dr. Hutcheson with great clearness and force; and the arguments he employs against it may with great justice be turned against himself. In general the safest rule we can follow in our inquiries concerning the principles of human conduct, is to acquiesce, in the first instance, in the plain and obvious appearance of facts; and if these conclusions are inaccurate, to correct them gradually in proportion as a more attentive examination of our subject discovers to us the prejudices which education and accidental associations have blended with the truth. It is at least a presumption in favour of any system concerning the mind, that it *falls in with the natural apprehensions of mankind in all countries and ages;*—and I believe it will commonly be found that these are the systems which, in the progress of human reason, are justified by the most profound and enlightened philosophy. I state this observation with the greater confidence, as it coincides with the following admirable remark of Mr. Hume,—an author who had certainly no interest in inculcating such a doctrine, as he seems to have paid very little attention to it in the course of his own speculations.

"The case is not the same in Moral Philosophy as in Physics. Many an hypothesis in nature, contrary to first appearances, has been found, on more accurate scrutiny, solid and satisfactory. Instances of this kind are so frequent that a judicious as well as witty philosopher, (Fontenelle,) has ventured to affirm, if there be more than one way in which a phænomenon may be produced, that there is a general presumption for its arising from the causes which are the least obvious and familiar. But the presumption always lies on the other side in all inquiries concerning the origin of our passions, and of the internal operations of the human mind. The simplest and most obvious cause which can there be assigned for any phænome-

non is probably the true one. When a philosopher, in the explication of his system, is obliged to have recourse to some very intricate and refined reflections, and to suppose them essential to the production of any passion or emotion, we have reason to be extremely on our guard against so fallacious an hypothesis. The affections are not susceptible of any impression from the refinements of reason or imagination; and it is always found that a vigorous exertion of the latter faculty necessarily, from the limited capacity of the human mind, destroys all activity in the former. Our predominant motive or intention is, indeed, frequently concealed from ourselves, when it is mingled and confounded with other motives, which the mind, from vanity and self-conceit, is desirous of supposing more prevalent; but there is no instance that a concealment of this nature has ever arisen from the abstruseness and intricacy of the motive. A man that has lost a friend and patron may flatter himself that all his grief arises from generous sentiments, without any mixture of narrow or interested considerations; but a man that grieves for a valuable friend who needed his patronage and protection, how can we suppose that his passionate tenderness arises from some metaphysical regards to a self-interest which has no foundation or reality? We may as well imagine that minute wheels and springs, like those of a watch, give motion to a loaded waggon, as account for the origin of passion from such abstruse reflections."*

In this passage Mr. Hume has censured very justly the theories which resolve the whole of human conduct into Self-love, and I apprehend that the same censure may be extended to that more amiable system which supposes our approbation of justice and veracity, and all our other duties, to arise from their apprehended tendency to promote the Happiness of Society.

But although it is not any views of Utility which originally lead us to approve of veracity and justice, yet it must be acknowledged, that, when a philosopher has once satisfied him-

* [*Essays*, Vol. II., *Inquiry concerning the Principles of Morals;* Appendix ii. *Of Self-Love.*]

self with respect to their real tendency, this consideration strengthens very much his sense of their obligation. And he may sometimes find it necessary to call this consideration to his aid when he is in danger of departing from general rules; as in the case of a Judge who is in danger of yielding to the impulse of compassion, till he opposes to it another benevolent affection of a more extensive nature, by reflecting on the *expediency* of adhering to the general rules of justice.

That the practice of veracity and justice, and of all our other duties, is useful to mankind, is acknowledged by moralists of all descriptions; and there is good reason for believing, that, if a person saw all the consequences of his actions, he would perceive that an adherence to their rules is useful and advantageous on the whole, even in those cases in which his limited views incline him to think otherwise. The same observation may be applied to *self-interest*, that the most effectual way of promoting it is to observe religiously the obligations of morality; and these are both very striking instances of that unity of design which is conspicuous both in the moral and natural world. This makes it an easy matter for a philosopher to give a plausible explanation of all our duties from one principle, because the *general tendency* of all of them is to determine us to the same course of life. That benevolence *may be* the sole principle of action in the Deity is possible, (although when we affirm that *it is so* we go beyond our depth;) but the case is obviously very different with mankind. If the hypothesis be just with respect to the Deity, we must suppose that he enjoined the duties of veracity and justice, not on account of their intrinsic rectitude, but of their utility. But still with respect to man they are indispensable laws, for he has an immediate perception of their rectitude. And indeed if he had not, but were left to deduce their rectitude from the consequences which they have a tendency to produce, we may venture to affirm that there would not be enough of virtue left in the world to hold society together.

It is remarked by Mr. Smith in a passage formerly quoted,*

* [P. 103; where farther references are given.]

and which cannot be too frequently recalled to the reader's attention, that "although, in accounting for the operations of Bodies, we never fail to distinguish the Efficient from the Final Cause, in accounting for those of the Mind we are very apt to confound these two different things with one another. When by natural principles we are led to advance those ends which a refined and enlightened reason would recommend to us, we are very apt to impute to that reason, as to their efficient cause, the sentiments and actions by which we advance those ends, and to imagine that to be the wisdom of man which in reality is the wisdom of God. Upon a superficial view this cause seems sufficient to produce the effects which are ascribed to it, and the system of human nature seems to be more simple and agreeable when all its different operations are in this manner deduced from a single principle."

The remarks which I have now made with respect to Dr. Hutcheson's philosophy are applicable, with some slight alterations, to a considerable variety of Moral Systems which have been offered to the world under very different forms; but which agree with each other in deriving the practical rules of virtuous conduct from considerations of Utility. All of these systems are but modifications of the old doctrine which resolves the whole of Virtue into Benevolence.

This theory of Utility (which is of a very ancient date, and which in modern times has derived much celebrity from the genius of Mr. Hume) has been revived more recently by Mr. Godwin, and by the late Dr. Paley. Widely as these two writers differ in the *source* whence they derive their rule of conduct, and the *sanctions* by which they enforce its observance, they are perfectly agreed about its paramount authority over every other principle of action. "Whatever is *expedient*," says Dr. Paley, "is *right*. It is the utility of any moral rule alone which constitutes the obligation of it."[1] . . . . "But then, it must be expedient *on the whole*, at the long run, in all its effects, collateral and remote, as well as those which are imme-

[1] *Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy*, Vol. I. p. 70. 5th edition [Book II. chap. vi.]

diate and direct, as it is obvious that, in computing consequences, it makes no difference in what way or at what distance they ensue."[1] Mr. Godwin has nowhere expressed himself on this fundamental question of practical ethics in terms more decided and unqualified.

The observations quoted from Mr. Smith on the proneness of the mind, in moral speculations, to confound together Efficient and Final Causes, furnish a key to the chief difficulty by which the patrons of this specious but very dangerous system have been misled.

Of this theory of utility, so strongly recommended to some by the powerful talents of Hume, and to others by the well-merited popularity of Paley, the most satisfactory of all refutations is to be found in the work of Mr. Godwin. It is unnecessary to inquire how far the practical lessons he has inculcated are logically inferred from his fundamental principle; for although I apprehend much might be objected to these, even on his own hypothesis, yet if such be the conclusions to which, in the judgment of so acute a reasoner, it *appeared* to lead with demonstrative evidence, nothing further is requisite to illustrate the practical tendency of a system, which, absolving men from the obligations imposed on them with so commanding an authority by the moral constitution of human nature, abandons every individual to the guidance of his own narrow views concerning the complicated interests of political society.[2]

[1] Ibid. p. 78. [Book II. chap. viii.] In another part of this work Dr. Paley explicitly asserts, that *every* moral rule is liable to be superseded in particular cases on the ground of expediency. "Moral philosophy cannot pronounce that any rule of morality is so rigid as to bend to no exceptions; nor, on the other hand, can she comprise these exceptions within any previous description. She confesses that the obligation of every law depends upon its ultimate utility; that this utility having a finite and determinate value, situations may be feigned, and consequently may possibly arise, in which the general tendency is outweighed by the enormity of the particular mischief; and of course where ultimate utility renders it as much an act of duty to break the rule, as it is on other occasions to observe it."—Vol. II. p. 411. [Book VI. chap. xii.]

[2] It is remarkable that Mr. Hume, by far the ablest advocate for the theory in question, has indirectly acknowledged its inconsistency with some of the most important facts which it professes to explain. "Though the *heart*," he observes in the fifth section of his *Inquiry*

Among the practical consequences which Dr. Paley deduces from the same principle, there are some which to my mind are not less revolting than those of Mr. Godwin. Such, for example, is the argument by which he controverts the received maxim of criminal jurisprudence, that *it is better for ten guilty persons to escape than for one innocent man to suffer.* But on this subject I need not enlarge. The sophistry, and I am sorry to add, the reckless inhumanity displayed in this part of Paley's work, have been triumphantly exposed by that great and good man Sir Samuel Romilly;—a man whom, long before his talents and worth were known to the public, I admired and loved, and whose memory I shall never cease to revere.[1]

From this digression (if it can be called a digression) with respect to the modern doctrine of Utility, I return to Dr. Hutcheson's scheme of Benevolence, by which the theory of Mr. Hume was plainly suggested, and to which all the more modern modifications of the same principle may be traced. Indeed, the theory of Utility must tacitly take for granted the scheme of Benevolence, in order to be complete and consistent. For

concerning Morals, "takes no part entirely with those general notions, nor regulates all its love and hatred by the universal abstract differences of vice and virtue, without regard to self, and the persons with whom we are more intimately connected, yet have these moral differences a considerable influence, and being sufficient at least for discourse, serve all the purposes in company, in the theatre, and in the schools." On this passage the following very curious note [Note E E] is to be found at the end of the volume; a note (by the way) which deserves to be added to the other proofs already given of the irresistible influence which the doctrine of Final Causes occasionally exercises over the most sceptical minds. "*It is wisely ordained by nature*, that private connexions should *commonly* prevail over universal views and considerations, otherwise our affections and actions would be dissipated and lost for want of a proper limited object." Does not this remark imply an acknowledgment, *first*, That the principle of general expediency (the *sole* principle of virtuous conduct, according to Mr. Hume, in our most important transactions with our fellow-creatures) would not contribute to the happiness of society if men should *commonly* act upon it; and, *secondly*, That some provision is made in our moral constitution that we shall, in fact, be influenced by other motives in discharging the offices of private life?

[1] *Observations on the Criminal Law of England as it relates to Capital Punishments, and on the way in which it is administered.* Printed for Cadell and Davies, 1810. See in particular Note D.

whence the obligation to consult general utility, but from the peculiar approbation with which the duty of benevolence is regarded?

To the strictures already offered on Hutcheson's writings, I have only to add, that he seems to consider Virtue as a quality of our *Affections*, whereas it is really a quality of our *Actions;* or (perhaps in strict propriety) of those *Dispositions* from which our actions immediately proceed. Our benevolent affections are always amiable, but, in so far as they are constitutional, they are certainly in no respect meritorious. Indeed, some of them are common to us with the brutes. When they are possessed in an eminent degree, we may perhaps consider them as a ground of moral esteem, because they indicate the pains which has been bestowed on their cultivation, and a course of active virtue in which they have been exercised and strengthened. On the contrary, a person who wants them is always an object of horror; *chiefly* because we know they are only to be eradicated by long habits of profligacy, and *partly* in consequence of the uneasiness we feel when we see the ordinary course of nature violated, as in a monstrous animal production. It is from these two facts that the plausibility of Dr. Hutcheson's language on this subject in a great measure arises; but if the facts be accurately examined, they will be found perfectly consistent with the doctrine already laid down, that nothing is an object of moral praise or blame but what depends on our own voluntary exertions; and of consequence, that these terms are not applicable to our benevolent or malevolent affections, so far as we suppose them to result necessarily from our constitutional frame.

There is another consideration, too, which, on a superficial view, appears favourable both to Hutcheson's language and system,—the peculiar and enthusiastic admiration with which all mankind regard a man of enlightened and active benevolence. Such a character draws upon itself not merely the *applauses*, but the *blessings* of the world, and assimilates human nature to what we conceive of those ministering angels who are the immediate instruments of the Divine goodness and mercy.

In order to think with accuracy on this very important point of morals, it is necessary to distinguish those benevolent affections which urge us to their respective objects by a blind impulse, from that rational and enlightened benevolence which interests us in the happiness of all mankind, and, indeed, of all the orders of sensitive being. This Divine principle of action appears but little in the bulk of our species; for although the seeds of it are sown in every breast, it requires long and careful cultivation to rear them to maturity, choked as they are by envy, by jealousy, by selfishness, and by those contracted views which originate in unenlightened schemes of human policy. Clear away these noxious weeds, and the genuine benevolence of the human heart will appear in all its beauty. No wonder, then, that we should regard, with such peculiar sentiments of veneration, the character of one whom we consider as the sincere and unwearied friend of humanity; for such a character implies the existence of all the other virtues, more particularly of candid and *just* dispositions towards our fellow-creatures, and implies, moreover, a long course of persevering exertion in combating prejudice, and in eradicating narrow and malignant passions. The gratitude, besides, which all men must feel towards one in whose benevolent wishes they know themselves to be comprehended, contributes to enliven the former sentiment of moral esteem; and both together throw so peculiar a lustre on this branch of duty, as goes far to account for the origin of those systems which represent it as the only direct object of moral approbation.

But what I am chiefly anxious to infer at present from these remarks is, that there is nothing in this approbation of a rational and enlightened benevolence which at all invalidates the doctrine, that virtue, in all its branches, supposes a course of voluntary exertion under the guidance of a sense of *duty*.

It may be worth while to add, before leaving the subject, that when a rational and habitual benevolence forms part of a character, it will render the conduct perfectly uniform, and will exclude the possibility of those inconsistencies that are frequently observable in individuals who give themselves up to the

guidance of particular affections, either private or public. How often, for example, do we meet with individuals who have great pretensions to public spirit, and even to humanity, on important occasions, who affect an habitual rudeness in the common intercourse of society! The public spirit of such men cannot possibly arise from genuine benevolence, otherwise the same principle of action would extend to every different part of the conduct by which the comfort of other men is affected; and in the case of most individuals, the addition they are able to make to human happiness, by the constant exercise of courtesy and gentleness to all who are within the sphere of their influence, is of far greater amount than all that can result from the more splendid and heroic exertions of their beneficence. A similar remark may be applied to such as are possessed of strong private attachments and of humanity to objects in distress, while they have no idea of public spirit; and also to those who lay claim to a more than common portion of patriotic zeal, while they avow a contempt for the general interests of humanity. In truth, all those offices, whether apparently trifling or important, which contribute to augment the happiness of our fellow-creatures,—civility, gentleness, kindness, humanity, patriotism, universal benevolence,—are only diversified expressions of the same disposition, according to the circumstances in which it operates, and the relation which the agent bears to others.

CHAPTER II.

OF JUSTICE.

THE word JUSTICE, in its most extensive signification, denotes that disposition which leads us, in cases where our own temper, or passions, or interest, are concerned, to determine and to act without being biassed by partial considerations.

I had occasion formerly to observe, that a desire of our own happiness is inseparable from our nature as sensitive and rational beings; or, in other words, that it is impossible to conceive a being capable of forming the ideas of happiness and misery, to whom the one shall not be an object of desire and the other of aversion. On the other hand, it is no less evident that this desire is a principle belonging to such beings *exclusively;* inasmuch as the very idea of *happiness,* or of *what is good for man on the whole,* presupposes the exercise of *reason* in the mind which is able to perform it; and as it is only a being possessed of the power of *self-government* which can pursue steadily this abstract conception, in opposition to the solicitations of present appetite and passion. This *rational self-love* (or in other words, this regard to what is good for us on the whole) is analogous, in some important respects, to that *calm benevolence* which has been already illustrated. They are both characteristical endowments of a rational nature, and they both exert an influence over the conduct in proportion as reason gains an ascendant over prejudice and error, and over those appetites which are common to us and to the brutes.

The inferior principles of action in our nature have all a manifest reference to one or other of these rational principles; for, although they operate without any reflection on our part,

they all lead to ends beneficial to the individual or to society. Of this kind are hunger, thirst, the desire of knowledge, the desire of esteem, pity to the distressed, natural affection, and a variety of others. Upon the whole, these two great principles of action, *Self-love* and *Benevolence*, coincide wonderfully in recommending one and the same course of conduct; and we have great reason to believe, that, if we were acquainted with all the remote consequences of our actions, they would be found to coincide entirely. There are, however, cases in which there *seems* to be an interference between them; and in such cases the generality of mankind are apt to be influenced more than they ought to be by self-love and the principles which are subsidiary to it. These sometimes lead them to act in direct opposition to their sense of duty; but much more frequently they influence the conduct by suggesting to the judgment partial and erroneous views of circumstances; and by persuading men that the line of their duty coincides with that which is prescribed by interest and inclination. Of all this every man capable of reflection must soon be convinced from experience, and he will study to correct his judgment in cases in which he himself is a party,—either by recollecting the judgments he has formerly passed in similar circumstances on the conduct of others, or by stating cases to himself in which his own interest and predilections are perfectly left out of the question. Now, I use the word *justice* to express that disposition of mind which leads a man, where his own interest or passions are concerned, to determine and to act according to those judgments which he would have formed of the conduct of another placed in a similar situation.

But although I believe that expedients of this sort are necessary to the best of men for correcting their moral judgments in cases in which they themselves are parties, it will not therefore follow, (as I have already observed,[1]) that our *only* ideas of Right and Wrong with respect to our own conduct are derived from our sentiments with respect to the conduct of others.

[1] Vol. I. pp. 331, 332. These paragraphs are transcribed here for the sake of connexion.

"The intention of such expedients is merely to obtain a just and fair view of circumstances; and after this view has been obtained, the question still remains, what constitutes the obligation upon us to act in a particular manner? It may be said, that, from recollecting my own judgments in similar cases in which I was concerned, I infer in what light my conduct will appear to society;—that there is an exquisite pleasure annexed to mutual sympathy, and that in order to obtain it, in order that other men may go along with my conduct, I accommodate it not to my own feelings, but to their judgment. Now I acknowledge that this may account for a man's *assuming* the appearance of virtue, and I believe that something of this sort is the real foundation of the *rules of good breeding in polished society;* but in the important concerns of life I apprehend there is something more; for when I have once satisfied myself with respect to the conduct which an impartial judge would approve of, I feel that this conduct is *right* for me, and that I am under a moral obligation to put it in practice. If I had had recourse to no expedient for correcting my first judgment, I would still have formed some judgment or other of a particular conduct, as right, wrong, or indifferent, and the only difference would have been, that I should probably have decided improperly from a false or a partial view of the case.

"From these observations I conclude, that the words *right*, *wrong*, *ought*, and *ought not*, express simple ideas, of which no explanation can be given. They are to be found in all languages, and it is impossible to carry on any moral speculation without them.—Even those authors who have rejected the supposition of a *Moral Faculty*, and who attempt to account for all our moral sentiments by certain modifications of Sympathy, find it impossible to avoid the use of these words. Thus when it is acknowledged that the propriety of action cannot be determined in all cases by the *actual* judgment of society, and that in such cases we must act according to the judgments which they *ought* to have formed, is not this to own that we have a standard of right and wrong in our own minds, to which we

find it of more consequence to adjust our conduct than to obtain the sympathy of other men?"

I must however remark, in order to prevent misapprehensions, that, if any person objects to the expressions *moral sense* or *moral faculty*, I do not take upon me to defend their propriety. I use them because they are commonly employed by ethical writers of late, and because I do not think them liable to misinterpretation after the explanation of them I formerly gave. I certainly do not consider them as expressing an implanted relish for certain qualities of actions analogous to our relish for certain tastes and smells. All I contend for is, that the words *right* and *wrong*, *ought* and *ought not*, express simple ideas; that our perception of these qualities in certain actions is an ultimate fact of our nature; and that this perception always implies the idea of moral obligation. When I speak of a Moral Sense or a Moral Faculty, I mean merely to express the power we have of forming these ideas; but I do not suppose that this bears any more analogy to our external Senses than the power we have of forming the simple ideas of *number*, of *time*, or of *causation*, which all arise in the mind, we cannot tell how, when certain objects or certain events are perceived by the understanding. If those ideas were as important as those of right and wrong, or had been as much under the review of philosophers, we might perhaps have had a *sense of Time*, a *sense of Number*, and a *sense of Causation*. And, in fact, something very like this language occurs in the writings of Lord Kames.

It is observed by Mr. Smith, as an argument against the existence of a Moral Sense or Moral Faculty, that these words are of very recent origin, and that it must appear very strange that a principle, which Providence undoubtedly intended to be the governing one of human nature, should hitherto have been so little taken notice of as not to have got a name in any language. If this observation is levelled merely at these two expressions, I have already said that I do not mean to defend them; but if it is to be understood as implying that the words *right* and *wrong*, *ought* and *ought not*, do not express simple ideas, I must take

the liberty of remarking, in opposition to it, that, although the words Moral Sense and Moral Faculty are of late origin, this is by no means the case with the word *conscience*. It is indeed said that this word (*conscience*) "does not immediately denote any Moral Faculty by which we approve or disapprove;—that it supposes indeed the existence of some such faculty, but that it properly signifies our consciousness of having acted agreeably or contrary to its directions."[1] But the truth I take to be this, that the word Conscience coincides exactly with the Moral Faculty, with this difference only, that the former refers to our own conduct alone, whereas the latter is meant to express also the power by which we approve or disapprove of the conduct of others. Now if this be granted, and if it be allowed that the former word is to be found in all languages, and that the *latter* is only a modern invention; is it not a natural inference, that our judgments, with respect to our own conduct, are not merely applications to ourselves of those we have previously formed with respect to the conduct of our fellow-creatures?[2]

I have taken this opportunity of making a few additional remarks on Mr. Smith's theory, because it is the virtue of Justice which furnishes the most plausible illustrations in support of it. But although I do not think it accounts for the origin of our ideas of Right and Wrong, and of Moral Obligation, I acknowledge that it throws much light on the means which nature has suggested to us for correcting our moral judgments, and has led to the observation of some very important facts with respect to a part of our constitution which had formerly almost entirely escaped the notice of philosophers.—I now proceed to some observations of a more practical nature, which the consideration of Justice suggests.

[1] Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, Vol. II. p. 354, *seq.* Sixth Edition. [Part VII. sect. iii. chap. 3. In the older editions, Part VI. sect. iii. chap. 3.]

[2] Mr. Smith (as I formerly hinted) was probably led at first into this train of thinking by his predecessor and preceptor, Dr. Hutcheson, according to whom the words *ought* and *obligation* are too *confused* to be admitted into philosophical discussions. "As to that confused word (*ought*) it is needless to apply to it again all that was said about *obligation*."—*Illustrations of the Moral Sense*, end of Sect. i.

It would be endless to attempt to point out all the various forms in which the disposition formerly defined will display itself in life. I must content myself with mentioning one or two of its more remarkable effects, merely as examples of the influence it is likely to have on the conduct. One of the most important of these is that temper of mind we express by the word *candour*, which prevents our judgments, with respect to other men, from being improperly biassed by our passions and prejudices. This, although at bottom the disposition is the same, may be considered in three lights: 1*st*, As it is displayed *in appreciating the talents of others.* 2*d*, *In judging of their intentions.* 3*d*, *In controversy.*

1*st*, There is no principle more deeply implanted in the mind than the love of fame and of distinction; and there is none which, when properly regulated, is subservient to more valuable purposes. It is, at the same time, a principle which it is perhaps as difficult to restrain within the bounds of moderation as any other. In some ungoverned minds it seems to get the better of every other principle of action, and must be a source to the possessor of perpetual mortification and disgust, by leading him to aspire at eminence in every different line of ambition, and to repine if in any one of them he is surpassed by others. In the midst of the astonishing projects which employed the sublime genius of Richelieu, his peace of mind was completely ruined by the success of the *Cid* of Corneille. The first appearance of this tragedy (according to Fontenelle) alarmed the Cardinal as much as if he had seen the Spaniards at the gates of Paris; and the most acceptable flattery which his minions could offer, was to advise him to eclipse the fame of Corneille by a tragedy of his own. Nor did he aim merely at adding the fame of a poet to that of a statesman. Mortified to think that any one path of ambition was shut against him, he is said, when on his deathbed, to have held some conversations with his confessor about the possibility of his being canonized as a saint. In order to restrain this violent and insatiable desire within certain bounds, there are many checks appointed in our constitution. In the first place, it can be

completely gratified only by the actual possession of those qualities for which we wish to be esteemed, and of those advantages which are the proper grounds of distinction. A good man is never more mortified than when he is praised for qualities he does not possess, or for advantages in which he is conscious he has no merit. Secondly, although the gratification of this principle consists in a certain superiority over other men, we feel that we are not entitled to take undue advantages of them. We may exert ourselves to the utmost in the race of glory, but we are not entitled to obstruct the progress of others, or to detract from their reputation in order to advance our own. All this will be readily granted in general; and yet in practice there is surely nothing more difficult than to draw the line between Emulation and Envy; or to check that self-partiality which, while it leads us to dwell on our own advantages, and to magnify them in our own estimation, prevents us either from attending sufficiently to the merits of others, or from viewing them in the most favourable light. Of this difficulty a wise and good man will soon be satisfied from his own experience, and he will endeavour to guard against it as far as he is able, by judging of the merits of a rival, or even of an enemy, as he would have done if there had been no interference between them. He will endeavour, in short, to do *justice* to their merits, not merely in words but in sincerity, and bring himself, if possible, to love and to honour that genius and ability which have eclipsed his own. Nor will he retire in disgust from the race because he has been outstripped by others, but will redouble all his exertions in the service of mankind; recollecting, that if nature has been more partial to others in her intellectual gifts than to him, she has left open to all the theatre of virtue, where the merits of individuals are determined, not by their actual attainments, but by the use and improvement they make of those advantages which their situation has afforded them. In the meantime, he will suffer no permanent mortification from the disappointment of his ambition; but from his exertions to suppress every emotion of envy, and to conquer the mean partialities of vanity and self-love, he will derive a satis-

faction with himself, and a sense of his own elevation, of a still more flattering kind than all the splendour of ability can bestow. I must not omit to add, that the love of fame and of distinction, where it is strong, is commonly united with a certain degree of genius, and is seldom to be found in men wholly destitute of it. While those, therefore, that are under the influence of this passion see a few raised *above* them, let them recollect their own superiority to the multitude, and study to make the only return in their power for this partiality of nature, by devoting their talents, such as they are, to diffuse in the world *truth, virtue, and happiness.*

2*d*, Candour in judging of the intentions of others. I before mentioned several considerations which render it highly probable that there is much less vice or criminal intention in the world, than is commonly imagined; and that the greater part of the disputes among mankind arise from mutual mistake and misapprehension. Every man must recollect many instances in which his motives have been grossly misapprehended by the world; and it is but reasonable for him to conclude that the case may have been the same with other men. It is but an instance, then, of that *justice* we owe to others, to make the most candid allowances for their apparent deviations, and to give every action the most favourable construction it can possibly admit of. Such a temper, while it renders a man respectable and amiable in society, contributes perhaps more than any other circumstance to his private happiness. "When you would cheer your heart," says Marcus Antoninus, "consider the excellencies and abilities of your several acquaintance; the activity of one, the high sense of honour and modesty of another, the liberality of a third, and in other persons some other virtue. There is nothing so delightful as Virtue appearing in the conduct of your contemporaries as frequently as possible. Such thoughts we should still retain with us."[1]

3*d*, Candour in controversy implies a strong sense of justice united to a disinterested love of truth,—two qualities which are so nearly allied that they can scarcely be supposed to exist

[1] *De Rebus Suis*, Book VI. § xlviii.

separately. The latter guards the mind against error in its solitary speculations, the former imposes an additional check when the irritation of dispute disturbs the cool exercise of the understanding. Where they are thus displayed in their joint effect, they evince the purity of that moral rectitude in which the essence of both consists; but so rarely is this combination exhibited in human life, even in the character of those who maintain the fairest reputation for justice and for veracity, as to warrant the conclusion, that these virtues (so effectually secured to a certain extent by compulsory law or by public opinion) are, in a moral point of view, of fully as difficult attainment as any of the others.

I formerly observed, that the *love of truth* is natural to the mind, independently of all views of utility, and that a strong curiosity properly directed is one of the chief constituents of genius. Without this stimulus and guide in our inquiries, ingenuity and industry only serve to lead us the farther astray from our object: And it is much to be regretted that there are so few cases in which these different qualities are all found united in the same person. Various circumstances indeed oppose themselves to this happy but rare combination; in particular, the affectation of singularity; an impatience in the study of particulars arising from an anxiety to grasp prematurely at general principles; and that aversion which the timid and the indolent feel to abandon their habitual opinions.

But perhaps there is no temper which so completely disqualifies us for the search of truth, as that which we experience when provoked by controversy or dispute. Some men undoubtedly are more misled by it than others; but I apprehend there is no one, however modest and unassuming, who will not own that, upon such occasions, he has almost always felt his judgment warped, and a desire of victory mingle itself, in spite of all his efforts, with his love of truth. Hence the aversion which all such men feel for controversy; convinced from experience how likely it would be to betray themselves into error, and unwilling to afford an opportunity for displaying the envious and malignant passions of others. This amiable disposi-

tion has been often mentioned by the friends of Sir Isaac Newton as one of the most marked features in his character; and we are even told that it led him to suppress, for a course of years, some of his most important discoveries, which he knew, from their nature, were likely to provoke opposition. "He was indeed," says one of his biographers, "of so meek and gentle a disposition, and so great a lover of peace, that he would have rather chosen to remain in obscurity, than to have the calm of life ruffled by those storms and disputes which genius and learning always draw upon those who are most eminent for them.

"From his love of peace arose, no doubt, that unusual kind of horror which he felt for all disputes. Steady unbroken attention, free from those frequent recoilings incident to others, was his peculiar felicity. He knew it, and he knew the value of it. When some objections, hastily made to his discoveries concerning light and colours, induced him to lay aside the design he had taken of publishing his *Optical Lectures*, we find him reflecting on that dispute into which he had unavoidably been drawn in these terms:—'I blamed my own imprudence for parting with so real a blessing as my quiet, to run after a shadow.' In the same temper, after he had sent the manuscript to the Royal Society, with his consent to the printing of it, upon Hook's injuriously insisting that he had himself solved Kepler's Problem before our author, he determined, rather than be involved again in a controversy, to suppress the third book; and he was very hardly prevailed on to alter that resolution."[1]

I shall only add further on this head, that a love of controversy indicates not only an overweening vanity and a disregard for truth, but, in general, perhaps always, it indicates a mediocrity of genius; for it arises from those feelings of envy and jealousy which provoke little minds to depreciate the merit of useful discoveries. He who is conscious of his own inventive powers, and whose great object is to add to the stock of human knowledge, will reject unwillingly any plausible doctrine till after the most severe examination, and will separate, with

[1] Hutton's *Mathematical Dictionary*.

patience and temper, the truths it contains from the errors that are blended with them. No opinion can be more groundless than that a captious and disputatious temper is a mark of acuteness. On the contrary, a sound and manly understanding is in no instance more strongly displayed than in a quick perception of important truth when imperfectly stated and blended with error; a perception which may not be sufficient to satisfy the judgment completely at the time, or at least to obviate the difficulties of others, but which is sufficient to prevent it from a hasty rejection of the whole, from the obvious defects of some of the parts. Hence the important hints which an author of genius collects among the rubbish of his predecessors; and which, so far from detracting from his own originality, place it in the strongest possible light, by showing that an idea which was already current in the world, and which had hitherto remained barren and useless, may, in the mind of a philosopher, become the germ of an extensive system.

I cannot help taking this opportunity of remarking, (although the observation is not much connected with the subject in which we are engaged,) that something similar to this may be applied to our critical judgments in the fine arts. It is easy to perceive blemishes, but it is the province of genius alone to have a quick perception of beauties, and to be eager to applaud them. And it is owing to this that of all critics a dunce is the severest, and a man of genuine taste the most indulgent.

> "Yes, they whom genius and true taste inspire,
> Blame not with half the pleasure they admire;
> Each trifling fault unwillingly descry,
> And view the beauties with a raptured eye."[1]

In the very elegant and interesting Life of Mr. Harris, published by his son, [the Earl of Malmesbury,] there is no circumstance more honourable at once to his head and heart than what is mentioned in the following passage:—

"It was with him a maxim, that the *most difficult*, and infinitely the preferable sort of criticism, both in literature and in the arts, was that which consists in finding out beauties,

[1] William Melmoth.

rather than defects. And, although he certainly wanted not judgment to distinguish and to prefer superior excellence of any kind, he was too reasonable to expect it should very often occur, and too wise to allow himself to be disgusted with common weakness and imperfection. He thought indeed that the very attempt to please, however it might fall short of its aim, deserved some return of thanks, some degree of approbation; and that to endeavour at being pleased by such efforts was due to justice, to good nature, and to good sense."*

The foregoing illustrations are stated at some length, in order to correct those partial definitions of justice which restrict its province to a rigorous observance of the rules of integrity or honesty in our dealings with our fellow-creatures. So far as this last disposition proceeds from a sense of duty, uninfluenced by human laws, it coincides exactly with that branch of virtue which has been now described under the title of Candour.

In the instances hitherto mentioned, the disposition of Justice has been supposed to operate in restraining the partialities of the temper and passions. There are, however, no instances in which its influence is more necessary than where our *interest* is concerned; or, to express myself more explicitly, where there is an apparent interference between our *rights* and those of other men. In such cases a disposition to observe the rules of justice is called *integrity* or *honesty*,—which is so important a branch of justice that it has in a great measure appropriated the name to itself. The observations made by Mr. Hume and Mr. Smith on the differences between justice and the other virtues, apply only to this last branch of it; and it is this branch which properly forms the subject of that part of ethics which is called *Natural Jurisprudence*.[1] In what remains of this chapter, when the word Justice occurs, it is to be understood in the limited sense now mentioned.

The circumstances which distinguish Justice from the other

* [*Works of James Harris, Esq.*, 4to edition, Vol. I. p. xxv.—See above, *Philosophical Essays*, (*Works*, Vol. V.) p. 372, *seq.*, and Note R R.]

[1] *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, Vol. II. p. 365, *et seq.* [Sixth Edition.—Part VII. sect. iv. In the previous editions, Part VI. sect. iv.]

virtues are chiefly two. In the first place, its rules may be laid down with a degree of accuracy of which moral precepts do not in any other instance admit. Secondly, its rules may be enforced, inasmuch as every breach of them violates the rights of some other person, and entitles him to employ force for his defence or security.

Another distinction between Justice and the other virtues is much insisted on by Mr. Hume.* It is, according to him, an artificial and not a natural virtue, and derives all its obligations from the political union, and from considerations of utility. The principal argument alleged in support of this proposition is, that there is no implanted principle, prompting us by a blind impulse to the exercise of justice, similar to those affections which conspire with and strengthen our benevolent dispositions. But granting the fact upon which this argument proceeds, nothing can be inferred from it that makes an essential distinction between the obligations of justice and of beneficence; for, so far as we act merely from the blind impulse of an affection, our conduct cannot be considered as virtuous. Our affections were given us to arrest our attention to particular objects, whose happiness is connected with our exertions; and to excite and support the activity of the mind, when a sense of duty might be insufficient for the purpose: but the propriety or impropriety of our conduct depends in no instance on the strength or weakness of the affection, but on our obeying or disobeying the dictates of reason and of conscience. These inform us, in language which it is impossible to mistake, that it is sometimes a duty to check the most amiable and pleasing emotions of the heart;—to withdraw, for example, from the sight of those distresses which stronger claims forbid us to relieve, and to deny ourselves that exquisite luxury which arises from the exercise of humanity. So far, therefore, as benevolence is a virtue, it is precisely on the same footing with justice; that is, we approve of it, not because it is agreeable to us, but because we feel it to be a duty.

* [Essays, Vol. II. *Inquiry concerning the Principles of Morals*, sect. iii. and Appendix iii.]

It may be farther remarked, that there are very strong implanted principles which serve as checks on *injustice;* the principles, to wit, of resentment and of indignation, which are surely as much a part of the human constitution as pity or parental affection. These principles imply a sense of injustice, and consequently of justice.

In one remarkable instance, too, nature has made an additional provision for keeping alive among men a sense of those obligations which justice imposes. That the good offices which we have received from others constitute a *debt* which it is morally incumbent on us to discharge by all lawful means in our power, is acknowledged in the common form of expression employed on such occasions, both by philosophers and the vulgar. As the obligations of gratitude, however, do not admit (like the rules of honesty, strictly so called) of support from the magistrate, nature has judged it proper to enforce their observance by one of the most irresistible and delightful impulses of the human frame. According to this view of the subject, gratitude, considered as a moral duty, is a branch of justice recommended to us in a peculiar manner by those pleasing emotions which accompany all the modes of benevolent affection. It is at the same time a branch of what was formerly called rational benevolence, not interfering with the duty we owe to mankind in general, but tending, in a variety of respects, to augment the sum of social happiness. The casuistical questions to which this part of ethics has given rise, however perplexing some of them may appear in theory, seldom, if ever, occasion any hesitation in the conduct of those to whom a sense of duty is the acknowledged rule of action:—Such is the harmony among all the various parts of our constitution, when subjected to the control of reason and conscience; and so nearly allied are the dispositions which prompt to the different offices of a virtuous life.

As the rules of justice, when applied to questions involving the rights of other men, admit in their statement of a degree of accuracy peculiar to themselves, that part of ethics which

relates to them has been formed in modern times into a separate branch of the science, under the title of Natural Jurisprudence. The manner in which this subject has been hitherto treated has been much influenced by the professional habits of those who first turned their attention to it. Not only have its principles been delivered in the form of a system of law, but the technical arrangements of the Roman code have been servilely copied.

What I mean by *stating the principles of Jurisprudence in the form of a system of law*, will appear from the following observations.

In the case of Justice there is always a *right* on one hand corresponding to an *obligation* on the other. If I am under an obligation, for example, to abstain from violating the property of my neighbour, he has a right to defend by force his property when invaded. It therefore appears that the rules of Justice may be laid down in two different forms, either as a *system of duties*, or as a *system of rights*. The former view of the subject belongs properly to the Moralist, the latter to the Lawyer. It is in this last form accordingly that the principles of justice have been stated by the writers on natural jurisprudence.

So far there is nothing to be reprehended in the plan they have followed. On the contrary, a considerable advantage was gained in point of method by adopting that very comprehensive and accurate division of our rights which the civilians had introduced. As the whole object of law is to protect men in all that they may lawfully *do*, or *possess*, or *demand*, civilians have defined the word *Jus* (or *Right*) to be, "*Facultas aliquid agendi, vel possidendi, vel ab alio consequendi*,"—"a lawful claim to do anything, to possess anything, or to demand some prestation from some other person." The first of these may be called the right of liberty, or the right of employing the powers we have received from nature in every case in which we do not injure the rights of others; the second, the right of property; the third, the rights arising from contract (or delinquency.) The two last were farther distinguished from each other by calling the former (to wit, the right of property) a *real* right, and the

latter (to wit, the rights arising from contract) *personal* rights, because they respect some particular person or persons from whom the prestation may be demanded.

This division of our rights appears to be comprehensive and philosophical, and it affords a convenient arrangement for exhibiting an indirect view of the different duties which justice prescribes. "What I have a right to do, it is the duty of my fellow-creatures to allow me to do without molestation. What is my property, no man ought to take from me, or to disturb me in the enjoyment of it. And what I have a right to demand of any man, it is his duty to perform."[1] Such a system, therefore, with respect to our rights, exhibits (though in a manner somewhat indirect and artificial) a system of the rules of justice.

But the writers on Natural Jurisprudence have not been contented with copying from the Roman law the great divisions of their subject. In consequence of that influence of professional habits which we may remark daily on the most vigorous, and in other respects the most enlightened understandings, they have been led to follow the Roman code in many unnatural and capricious arrangements; and what is worse, they have substituted some of its most absurd principles as maxims of natural justice. To the same cause may be ascribed the frivolous discussions with respect to minute and imaginary questions which so often occupy the place of those general and fundamental disquisitions that are suggested by the common nature and the common circumstances of the human race. It is sufficient to mention the space which is occupied in most systems of jurisprudence, with an explanation of the different methods of acquiring property by *Accession*, and with a discussion of the various imaginary cases that may be supposed when the properties of different individuals may happen to be thus confounded.

A still more material inconvenience has resulted from the professional habits of the early writers on Jurisprudence. Not contented with stating the rules of justice in that form and language which was most familiar to their own minds, they have

[1] Reid, *On the Active Powers*, p. 388, quarto edition. [Essay V. chap. iii.—*Works*, p. 643.]

attempted to extend the same plan to all the other branches of Moral Philosophy; and, by the help of arbitrary definitions, to supersede the necessity of accommodating their modes of inquiry to the various natures of their subject. Although justice is the only branch of virtue in which there is always a right on the one hand, corresponding to an obligation on the other, they have contrived, by fictions of *imperfect* and of *external* rights, to treat indirectly of all our different duties, by pointing out the rights which are supposed to be their correlates. It is chiefly owing to this that a study which, in the writings of the ancients, is the most engaging and the most useful of any, has become in so great a proportion of modern systems as uninviting and almost as useless as the logic of the schoolmen.

Besides these defects in the modern systems of Jurisprudence, (defects produced by the accidental habits of those who first cultivated the study,) there is another essential one arising from the object of the science. Although the obligations of Justice are by no means resolvable into considerations of Utility, yet in every political association they are so blended together in the institutions of men, that it is impossible for us to separate them completely in our reasonings. And accordingly (as Mr. Hume has remarked*) the writers on jurisprudence, while they profess to confine themselves entirely to the former, are continually taking principles for granted which have a reference to the latter. It seems, therefore, to be proper, instead of treating of jurisprudence merely as a system of natural justice, to unite it with Politics, and to illustrate the general principles of justice and of expediency, as they are actually combined in the constitution of society. This view of the subject (which properly belongs to the consideration of man as the member of a political body) will show, at the same time, how happily these principles coincide in their application; and how partial those conceptions of utility are which have so often led politicians to depart from what they felt to be just, in quest of what their limited judgment apprehended to be expedient.

* [*Essays*, Vol. II.; *Inquiry concerning the Principles of Morals*, sect. iii.;—p. 220, ed. 1788. See also Appendix iii.]

SUPPLEMENT TO CHAPTER SECOND.

The following observations on the *Right of Property* are introduced here chiefly with a view of illustrating a remark in the foregoing chapter, that we possess rights antecedent to the establishment of the political union. The greater part of them have a reference to the Essay on Property in Lord Kames's *Historical Law Tracts*.[1]

It cannot, I apprehend, be doubted, that, according to the notions to which we in the present state of society are habituated from our infancy, the three following things are included in the idea of property:—

1. A right of exclusive enjoyment.
2. A right of inquiry after our property when taken away without our consent, and of reclaiming it wherever found.
3. A right of transference.

We do not consider our property in any object to be complete, unless we can exercise all these three rights with respect to it.

Lord Kames endeavours to show that these ideas are not agreeable to the apprehensions of the human mind in the ruder periods of society, but imply a refinement and abstraction of thought, which are the result of improvement in law and government. The relation (in particular) of property, independent of possession, he thinks of too metaphysical a nature for the mind of a savage. "It appears to me," says he, "to be highly probable, that among savages involved in objects of sense, and strangers to abstract speculation, property, and the rights or moral powers arising from it, never are with accuracy distinguished from the natural powers that must be exerted upon the subject to make it profitable to the possessor. The man who kills and eats, who sows and reaps, at his own pleasure, independent of another's will, is naturally deemed proprietor. The grossest savages understand power without right, of which they are made sensible by daily acts of violence; but

[1] Tract iii.; third Edition.

property without possession is a conception too abstract for a savage, or for any person who has not studied the principles of law."[1]

With this remark I cannot agree; because I think the right of property is founded on a natural sentiment, which must be felt in full force in the lowest state of society. The sentiment I allude to is that of *a moral connexion between Labour and a right of exclusive enjoyment to the fruits of it.* This connexion it will be proper to illustrate more particularly.

Let us suppose, then, a country so fertile as to produce all the necessaries and accommodations of life, without any exertions of human industry; it is manifest, that in such a state of things no man would think of appropriating to himself any of these necessaries or accommodations, any more than we in this part of the globe think of appropriating air or water. As this, however, is not in any part of the earth, the condition of man, doomed as he is, by the circumstances of his birth, to eat his bread in the sweat of his brow, it would be reasonable to expect, *a priori*, that nature would make some provision for securing to individuals the fruits of their industry. In fact, she *has* made such a provision in the natural sentiments of mankind, which lead them to consider industry as entitled to reward, and in particular, the labourer as entitled to the fruit of his own labour. These, I think, may be fairly stated as *moral axioms*, to which the mind yields its assent, as immediately and necessarily as it does to any axiom in mathematics or metaphysics.

How cruel is the mortification we feel when we see an industrious man reduced by some unforeseen misfortune to beggary in old age! We can scarcely help complaining of the precarious condition of humanity, and that man should be thus doomed to be the sport of accident: And we feel ourselves called on, as far as we are able, to repair, by our own liberality, this unjust distribution of the goods of fortune. On the other hand, it is difficult to avoid some degree of dissatisfaction when we see the natural and deserved reward of industry acquired

[1] Tract iii.; same Edition, p. 90.

all at once by a prize in the lottery or by gaming, although in this instance the uneasiness (as might be expected from the natural benevolence of the human mind) is trifling in comparison of what it is in the other case. Our dissatisfaction in particular instances is much greater when we see the labourer deprived by accident of the *immediate* fruit of his own labour; —when, for example, he has nearly completed a complicated machine, and some delicate part of it gives way and renders all his toil useless.

If another person interferes with the fruit of his industry, our dissatisfaction and indignation are still more increased. We feel here a variety of sentiments. 1. A dissatisfaction that the labourer does not enjoy that reward to which his industry entitled him. 2. A dissatisfaction that another person, who did not labour, should acquire the possession of an object of value. And 3. An indignation against the man who deprived the labourer of his just reward.

This sentiment, "that the labourer deserves the fruit of his own labour," is the *chief*, (or rather abstracting from positive institution,) the *only* foundation of the sense of property. An attempt to deprive him of it is a species of *injustice* which rouses the indignation of every impartial spectator; and so deeply are these principles implanted in our nature, that we cannot help feeling some degree of remorse when we deprive even a hive of bees of that provision which they had industriously collected for their own use.

The writers, indeed, on Natural Law, ascribe in general the origin of property to priority of Occupancy, and have puzzled themselves in attempting to explain how this act should appropriate to an individual what was formerly in common. Grotius and Pufendorff insist that this right of occupancy is founded upon a tacit but understood assent of all mankind, that the first occupant should become the owner. And Barbeyrac, Locke, and others, that the very act of occupancy alone, being a degree of bodily labour, is, from a principle of natural justice, without any compact, a sufficient foundation of property. Blackstone, although he thinks that the dispute about the

manner in which occupancy conveys a right of property, savours too much of scholastic refinement, expresses no doubt about its having this effect independent of positive institutions.[1]

Some later philosophers have founded the right of property on the general Sympathy of mankind with the *reasonable* Expectation which the occupant has formed of enjoying unmolested the object he has got possession of, or of which he was the first discoverer; and on the indignation felt by the impartial spectator when he sees this reasonable expectation disappointed. This theory (which I have been assured from the best authority was adopted by Mr. Smith in his Lectures on Jurisprudence) seems to have been suggested by a passage in Dr. Hutcheson's *Moral Philosophy*, in which he says, that "it is immoral, when we can support ourselves otherwise, to defeat any innocent design of another; and that on this immorality is founded the regard we owe to the claims of the first occupant."* In this theory, too, it is taken for granted that priority of occupancy founds a right of property, and that such a right may even be acquired by having accidentally *seen* a valuable object before it was observed by any other person.

In order to think with accuracy on this subject, it is necessary to distinguish carefully the *complete* right of property which is founded on Labour, from the *transient* right of possession which is acquired by mere priority of Occupancy. Thus, before the appropriation of land, if any individual had occupied a particular spot for repose or shade, it would have been *unjust* to deprive him of the possession of it. This, however, was only a transient right. The spot of ground would again become *common* the moment the occupier had left it; that is, the *right* of possession would remain no longer than the *act* of possession. Cicero illustrates this happily by the similitude of a theatre. "Quemadmodum theatrum, cum commune sit, recte tamen dici potest ejus esse eum locum quem quisque occuparit."[2]

[1] See his *Commentaries*, Book II. chap. i.

* [See the *System of Moral Philosophy*, Book II. chap. vi. § 5. Also the *Institutio Compendiaria*, Lib. II. c. v. § 4.]

[2] *De Finibus*, Lib. III. c. xx.

The general conclusions which I deduce from the foregoing observations are these:—

1. That in every state of society Labour, wherever it is exerted, is understood to found a right of property.

2. That, according to natural law, (in the sense at least in which that phrase is commonly employed by writers on jurisprudence,) Labour is the *only* original way of acquiring property.

3. That, according to natural law, mere Occupancy founds only a right of possession; and that, wherever it founds a *complete* right of property, it owes its force to positive institutions.

An attention to these conclusions, in particular to the distinction between the *transient* right of possession founded on Occupancy, and the *permanent* right of property founded on Labour, will, if I am not mistaken, clear up some of the difficulties which involve the first steps in the history of property, according to the view of the subject given by Lord Kames; and it was with this view I was led to premise these general principles to the slight historical sketch I am now to offer.

With respect to that system which refers the origin of property to the political union and to considerations of Utility, it seems sufficient to observe, that so far is government from *creating* this *right*, that its necessary effect is to subject it to certain limitations. Abstracting from the political confederation, every man's property is solely at his own disposal. He is supreme judge in his own cause, and may defend what he conceives to be his right as far as his power reaches. In the state of civil society his property is regulated by positive laws, and he must acquiesce in the judgment of his superiors with respect to his rights, even in those cases where he feels it to be unjust.

From the passage already quoted [p. 260] from Kames, it appears that he conceived the idea of property without possession to be of too abstract and metaphysical a nature to be apprehended by a savage; and he has collected a variety of

facts to prove, that, according to the common notions of mankind, in the infancy of jurisprudence, the right of property is understood to cease the moment that possession is at an end. But on a more attentive examination of the subject, I apprehend it will be found that the ideas of savages, with respect to property, are the same with ours; that mere occupancy without labour founds only a right of possession; and that labour, wherever it is employed, founds an exclusive and permanent right to the fruits of it. Lord Kames's theory has obviously been suggested by the common doctrine with respect to the right of property being founded in priority of occupancy, compared with the acknowledged fact, that among rude nations occupancy does not establish a permanent right. The other arguments which he has alleged in support of his opinion will be found to be equally inconclusive.

Before I proceed to the consideration of these it may be proper to observe, that we must not always form an idea of the sentiments of men from the *defects* of their laws. The existence indeed of a law is a proof of the sentiments which men felt when the law was made; but the defects of a law are not always proofs that men did not feel that there *were* disorders in the state of society which required correction. The laws of a country may not make provision for reparation to the original proprietor in the case of theft; but it will not follow from this, that men do not apprehend the original proprietor to have any *right* when his property has been stolen from him. The application of this general remark to some of the arguments I am now to consider will, I hope, be so obvious as to render it unnecessary for me to point it out particularly.

Among these arguments, one of the most plausible is founded on a general principle, which appears, from a variety of facts quoted by Kames, to run through most rude systems of jurisprudence, that, in the case of stolen goods, the claim of the *bona fide* Purchaser is preferable to that of the original proprietor. This he accounts for from the imperfect notions they have of the metaphysical nature of property when separated

from possession. But if this were the case, the same laws should support the claim of the *thief* against the original proprietor: or rather, indeed, neither the original proprietor, nor any one else, could conceive that he had any connexion with the object stolen the moment after it was out of his possession. The fact is, that this respect paid to the *bona fide* purchaser is a proof not of any misapprehension with respect to the idea of property, but of a weak government and an imperfect police. Where thefts are easily committed, and where no public fairs or markets are established, it would put a complete end to all transferences of property, if the *bona fide* purchaser were left exposed to the claims of former proprietors. Such a practice would be attended with still greater inconveniences than arise from the casual violations of property by theft; not to mention that the regard shown to the *bona fide* purchaser must have a tendency to repress theft, by redoubling the attention of individuals to preserve the actual possession of their property. That these or some other views of utility were the real foundation of the laws quoted by Kames, is confirmed by an old regulation in our own country, prohibiting buying and selling, except in open market,—a regulation which had obviously been suggested by the experience of the inconveniences arising from the latent claims of former proprietors against *bona fide* purchasers.

Another argument mentioned by Kames in support of his theory is founded on the shortness of the term which completes Prescription among rude nations; a single year, for example, in the case of moveables, by the oldest law of the Romans. This law, he says, testifies that property, independent of possession, was considered to be a *right of the slenderest kind.* It is evident, that, upon his own principles, it should not in that state of society have been considered as a right at all. If it was conceived to subsist a single day after the possession was at an end, the metaphysical difficulty which he magnifies so much was obviously surmounted. In every society it will be found expedient to fix some term for prescription, and the particular length of it must be determined by the circumstances of the society at the time. In general, as law improves, and

government becomes more effectual, a greater attention to the stability of property, and consequently a longer term for prescription, may be expected.

The Community of goods which is said to take place among some rude nations will be found, on examination, to be perfectly consistent with the account I have given of their ideas on the subject of property. Where the game is taken by a common effort, the natural sense of justice dictates that it should be enjoyed in common. And indeed, abstracting from all considerations of justice, the experience of the precarious fortune of the chase would soon suggest to the common sense of mankind the expediency of such an arrangement. This, however, does not indicate any imperfection in their idea of property; for even in this state of society there are always some articles which are understood to be the exclusive property of the individual, such as his bow and arrows, and the instruments he employs in fishing.

I am confirmed in these conclusions by the account given by Dr. Robertson of the American Indians; and the more so, as the facts he mentions, and even his reasonings, stand in opposition to his own preconceived opinion. "*Nations,*" he says expressly, "*which depend upon hunting are strangers to the idea of property;*" and yet, when he comes to explain himself, it appears that even in the present age of metaphysical refinement, if our physical circumstances were the same, we should feel and judge exactly as they do. "As the animals," he continues in the passage immediately following the last sentence quoted, "on which the hunter feeds are not bred under his inspection, nor nourished by his care, he can claim no right to them while they run wild in the forest. Where game is so plentiful that it can be catched with little trouble, men never dream of appropriating what is of small value, or of easy acquisition. Where it is so rare that the labour or danger of the chase requires the united efforts of a tribe or village, what is killed is a common stock belonging equally to all, who, by their skill or their courage, have contributed to the success of the excursion. The forest or hunting grounds are deemed the pro-

perty of the tribe, from which it has a title to exclude every rival nation. But no individual arrogates a right to any district of these in preference to his fellow-citizens. They belong equally to all, and thither, as to a general and undivided store, all repair in quest of sustenance. The same principles by which they regulate their chief occupation extend to that which is subordinate. Even agriculture has not introduced among them a complete idea of property. As the men hunt, the women labour together, and after they have shared the toils of the seed-time, they enjoy the harvest in common."[1]

In the notes and illustrations at the end of the History, Dr. Robertson seems to have been aware that he had expressed himself somewhat too strongly on this subject, and he has even gone so far as to intimate his suspicions that the common facts are not very accurately stated. "I strongly suspect that a community of goods and an undivided store, are known only among the rudest tribes of hunters, and that as soon as any species of agriculture or regular industry is known, the idea of an exclusive right of property to the fruits of them is introduced."

In support of this opinion, Dr. Robertson refers to accounts which he had received concerning the state of property among the Indians in very different regions of America. "The idea of the natives of Brazil," says the Chevalier de Pinto, who writes on this subject from personal observation, "concerning property is, that if any person cultivate a field, he alone ought to enjoy the produce of it, and no other has a title to pretend to it. If an individual or a family go a hunting or fishing, what is caught belongs to the individual or family, and they communicate no part of it but to their Cazique, and such of their kindred as happen to be indisposed.

"If any person in the village come to their hut, he may sit down freely and eat without asking liberty. But this is the consequence of their general principle of hospitality, for I never observed any partition of the increase of their fields, or the produce of the chase, which I could consider as the result of any

[1] *History of America*, Book iv.

idea concerning the community of goods. On the contrary, they are so much attached to what they deem to be their property, that it would be extremely dangerous to encroach on it. As far as I have seen or can learn, there is not one tribe of Indians in South America among whom that community of goods, which has been so highly extolled, is known. The circumstance in the government of the Jesuits most irksome to the Indians of Paraguay, was the community of goods which those fathers introduced. This was repugnant to the original ideas of the Indians. They were acquainted with the rights of private exclusive property, and they submitted with impatience to the regulations which destroyed them."[1]

"Actual possession," says a Missionary who resided several years among the Indians of the Five Nations, "gives a right to the soil, but, whenever a possessor sees fit to quit it, another has as good a right to take it as he who left it. This law or custom respects not only the particular spot on which he erects his house, but also his planting-ground. If a man has prepared a particular spot of ground, on which he proposes in future to build or plant, no man has a right to incommode him, much less to the fruit of his labours, until it appears that he voluntarily gives up his views. But I never heard of any formal conveyance from one Indian to another in their natural state. The limits of every canton is circumscribed, that is, they are allowed to hunt as far as such a river on this hand, and such a mountain on the other. This area is occupied and improved by individuals and their families. Individuals, not the community, have the use and profit of their own labours, or success in hunting."[2]

In a passage quoted on a former occasion from Crantz, [*Works*, Vol. VI. p. 239,] a remarkable instance is given of a sacred and even superstitious regard to property among the Greenlanders. "Not one of these people," says he, "will appropriate to himself a sea-dog, in which he finds one or more harpoons with untorn thongs, nor even carry away drift-wood, or other things

[1] M. le Chev. de Pinto, MS., quoted by Dr. Robertson.

[2] MS. of Mr. Gideon Kawley, quoted by Dr. Robertson.

thrown up by the sea, if they are covered with a stone, because they consider this as an indication that they have been already appropriated by some other person." This is the more singular, as they are described by the same very authentic writer, as carrying their pacific and unresisting disposition to an extraordinary length, when their own rights are invaded by strangers. "They will rather," he tells us, "quit a territory, than expel those who come and fish within the dams which they have raised with great labour." He justly, however, ascribes this to the passiveness and cowardice of their tempers, and not to a defect in their idea of property, or to an unconsciousness of the injury they have received. The contrary, indeed, may be safely inferred from the singular integrity by which they are distinguished in their own transactions.

I formerly said, that, according to the *Law of Nature*, Labour not only founds an exclusive right of property in those objects to which it has communicated their utility, but that it is the *sole* method by which an object *can* be appropriated by an individual, independently of conventional ideas and institutions; and that, wherever a priority of occupancy is understood to establish a right beyond the period of actual possession, it derives this effect entirely from regulations (either tacitly or formally recognised among the parties concerned) which have been gradually suggested, in the progress of human reason, by considerations of convenience or of expediency. It must not, however, be inferred from this, that in a civilized society there is anything in that species of property which is acquired by labour to which individuals owe a more sacred regard, than they do to every other species of property created or recognised by positive laws. Among these last there are *many* which have derived their origin from a principle no less obligatory than our natural sense of *justice;* a clear perception in the mind of the legislator (sanctioned perhaps by the concurrent experience of different ages and nations) of *general utility;* and to *all* of them, while they exist, the reverence of the subject is due on the same principle which binds him to respect and to maintain the social order. Nature has provided for

human happiness, in this instance, in a manner precisely analogous to her general economy. Those simple and indispensable rules of *right* and *wrong*, of *just* and *unjust*, without which the fruits of the earth could not be converted to the use of man, nor his existence maintained even in the rudest form of the social union, she has engraved on the heart as an essential part of the human constitution,—leaving men, as society advances, to employ their gradually improving *reason* in fixing, according to their own ideas of expediency, the various regulations concerning the acquisition, the alienation, and transmission of property, which the more complicated interests of the community may require.

It is also beautifully ordered, that, while a regard for legal property is thus secured, among men capable of reflection, by a sense of general utility, the same effect is accomplished, in the minds of the multitude, *by habit and the association of ideas;* in consequence of which all the inequalities of fortune are sanctioned by mere prescription; and long possession is conceived to found a *right of property* as complete as what, by the law of nature, an individual has in the fruits of his own industry.

In such a state of things, therefore, as that with which we are connected, the right of property must be understood to derive its origin from *two* distinct sources; the one is, that *natural sentiment* of the mind which establishes a moral connexion between labour and an exclusive enjoyment of the fruits of it; the other is the *municipal institutions* of the country where we live. These institutions everywhere take rise partly from ideas of natural justice, and partly (perhaps chiefly) from ideas of supposed utility,—two principles which, when properly understood, are, I believe, always in harmony with each other, and which it ought to be the great aim of every legislator to reconcile to the utmost of his power. Among those questions, however, which fall under the cognizance of positive laws, there are many on which natural justice is entirely silent, and which, of consequence, may be discussed on principles of *utility* solely. Such are most of the questions concerning the regula-

tion of the succession to a man's property after his death; of some of which it may perhaps be found that the determination ought to *vary* with the circumstances of the society, and which have certainly, *in fact*, been frequently determined by the caprice of the legislator, or by some principle ultimately resolvable into an accidental association of ideas. Indeed, various cases may be supposed in which it is not only useful but necessary that a rule should be fixed; while, at the same time, *neither* Justice nor Utility seem to be much interested in the particular decision.

In examining the questions which turn on considerations of *Utility*, some will immediately occur of which the determination is so obvious, and at the same time so universal in their application, that the laws of all enlightened nations on the subject may be expected to be the same. Of this description are many of the questions which may be stated with respect to the effects of *priority of occupancy* in establishing *permanent* rights. These questions are of course frequently confounded with questions of *natural law*; and in *one* sense of that phrase they may not improperly be comprehended under the title, but the distinction between them and the other class of questions is essential; for wherever considerations of Utility are involved the political union is supposed; whereas the principles of *Justice*, properly so called, (of that justice, for example, which respects the right of the labourer to enjoy the fruit of his own industry,) is inseparable from the human frame. It is necessary (as I already said) to maintain the social union even in its simplest form; and in its most improved state it operates as a principle of morality to guard the rights of individuals, and to maintain the order of society, in numberless instances to which the laws of the magistrate cannot extend.

I have insisted the longer on this distinction, because, obvious as it may appear, it has been seldom attended to by writers on Jurisprudence. Confining their views to the state of their *own* ideas and feelings as modified by artificial habits, they have neglected to draw the line between the *right of property as recognised by the law of nature*, and the *right of property as*

created by municipal institutions. In their speculations, accordingly, on this subject, they have searched for *one general principle* into which all the different phenomena might be resolved; and, in this manner, while they have perverted the history of mankind in the early stages of society, they have weakened the foundations on which property rests when considered as a part of the political system.

CHAPTER III.

OF VERACITY.

The important rank which Veracity holds among our social duties appears from the obvious consequences that would result if no foundation were laid for it in the constitution of our nature. The purposes of speech would be frustrated, and every man's opportunities of knowledge would be limited to his own personal experience.

Considerations of utility, however, do not seem to be the only ground of the approbation we bestow on this disposition. Abstracting from all regard to consequences, there is something pleasing and amiable in sincerity, openness, and truth; something disagreeable and disgusting in duplicity, equivocation, and falsehood. Dr. Hutcheson himself, the great patron of that theory which resolves all moral qualities into benevolence, confesses this; for he speaks of a *sense* which leads us to approve of Veracity, distinct from the *sense* which approves of qualities useful to mankind. "Facultatis hujus, sive orationis, comes est et moderator *sensus* quidam subtilior, ex veri etiam cognoscendi appetitione naturali non parum confirmatus, quo vera omnia, simplicia, fidelia comprobamus; falsa ficta, fallacia odimus."[1]—"*Sensu* enim cujusque *proxime* commendatur is sermonis usus, quem communis exigit utilitas. . . . Hoc vero stabile consilium eo tantum utendi sermone, qui cum animi sententia congruit, quique alios non decipiet, comprobant et animi sensus *per se*, et utilitatis communis ratio."[2] As this,

[1] *Philosophiæ Moralis Institutio Compendiaria*, Lib. II. cap. ix. § 1.

[2] Ibid. Lib. II. cap. x. § 1.

Aristotle expresses himself nearly to the same purpose. Καθ' αὑτὸ μὲν ψεῦδος φαῦλον καὶ ψεκτόν; τὸ δὲ ἀληθὲς καλὸν καὶ ἐπαινετόν.—*Eth. Nic.* Lib. IV. cap. vii. Various passages of a similar import occur in Cicero.

however, is at best but a vague way of speaking, it may be proper to analyze more particularly that part of our constitution from which our approbation of Veracity arises.

That there is in the human mind a natural or instinctive principle of veracity, has been remarked by many authors; the same part of our constitution which prompts to social intercourse, prompting also to sincerity in our mutual communications. Truth is always the spontaneous and native expression of our sentiments; whereas falsehood implies a certain violence done to our nature, in consequence of the influence of some motive which we are anxious to conceal.

With respect to the nature of TRUTH various metaphysical speculations have been offered to the world, and various definitions have been attempted, both by the ancients and moderns. These, however, have thrown but little light on the subject, which is not surprising, when we consider that the word *truth* expresses a simple idea or notion, of which no analysis or explication is possible. The same observation may be made with respect to the words *knowledge* and *belief*. All of them express notions which are implied in every judgment of the understanding, and which no being can form who is not possessed of a rational nature. And, by the way, these notions deserve to be added to the list formerly mentioned, as exemplifications of the imperfection of the account commonly given of the origin of our ideas. They are obviously not derived from any particular sense; and they do not seem to be referable to any part of our constitution, but to the *understanding;* or, in other words, to those rational powers which distinguish man from the brutes. This language, I know, will appear to be very loose and inaccurate to those who have familiarized their minds to the common doctrine; but it is a plain and indisputable statement of the fact.

To acquire knowledge or to discover truth, is the proper object of *Curiosity;* a principle of action which is coeval with the first operations of the intellect, and which in most minds continues through life to have a powerful influence in one way or another on the character and the conduct. It is this prin-

ciple which puts the intellectual faculties in motion, and gives them that exercise which is necessary for their development and improvement; and which, according to the direction it takes, and the particular set of faculties it exercises, is the principal foundation of the *diversities* of genius among men. And as the *diversities* of genius proceed from the different directions in which curiosity engages the attention, so the *inequalities* of genius among individuals may be traced in a great measure to the different degrees of ardour and of perseverance with which the curiosity operates. When I say this, I would not be understood to insinuate, that the different capacities of individuals are the same; a supposition contradicted by obvious facts, and contrary to what we should be led to conclude from the analogy of the body. I only wish to impress on all those who have any connexion with the education of youth, the great importance of stimulating the curiosity, and of directing it to proper objects, as the most effectual of all means for securing the improvement of the mind: I may add, as one of the most effectual provisions that can be made for the happiness of the individual, in consequence of the resources it furnishes when we are left to depend on ourselves for enjoyment; and in consequence also of the progressive vigour with which it operates to the very close of life, in proportion to the enlargement of our experience and the extent of our information.

In order, however, to prevent misapprehensions of my meaning, it is necessary for me again to remark, that the Curiosity on which I lay so great a stress is that curiosity alone which has *truth* for its object. "There are many men," says Butler, "who have a strong curiosity to know what is *said*, who have no curiosity to know what is *true*;"*—men who value knowledge only as furnishing an employment to their memory, or as supplying a gratification to their vanity in their intercourse with others. It is a weakness which we may presume has prevailed more or less in all ages; but which has been much encouraged in modern Europe, by that superstitious admiration of antiquity which has withdrawn so much genius and industry

* [Preface to *Sermons upon Human Nature.*]

from the pursuits of science to those of erudition. No prejudice can be conceived more adverse to the progress of useful knowledge, not only as it occasions an idle waste of time and labour which might have been more profitably employed, but as it contributes powerfully to destroy that simplicity and modesty of temper which are the genuine characteristics of the true philosopher.

I think it of importance to add, that the love of truth, where it is the great motive of our intellectual pursuits, gains daily an accession of strength as our knowledge advances. I already said that it is an ultimate fact in our nature, and is not resolvable into views of utility. Its extensive effects on human happiness are discovered only in the progress of our experience; but when this discovery is once made, it superadds to our instinctive curiosity every stimulus which self-love and benevolence can furnish. The connexion between error and misery, between truth and happiness, becomes gradually more apparent as our inquiries proceed, and produces at last a complete conviction that, even in those cases where we are unable to trace it, the connexion subsists. He who feels this as he ought, will consider a steadfast adherence to the truth as an expression of benevolence to man, and of confidence in the righteous administration of the universe, and will suspect the purity of those motives, which would lead him to advance the good of his species or the glory of his Maker, by deceit and hypocrisy.

In offering these remarks, I shall no doubt be thought to have taken a very wide circuit in order to illustrate the nature of that veracity which is incumbent on us in our intercourse with our fellow-creatures. But it appears to me that the most solid of all foundations for the uniform and the scrupulous exercise of this virtue, is to cherish the love of truth in general, and to impress the mind with a conviction of its important effects on our own happiness and on that of society. There is, indeed, a sort of gross and ostensible practice of this duty, which is secured by what we call the *point of honour* in modern Europe, which brands with infamy every palpable deviation from the truth in matters of *fact*. The law of honour here

operates in the case of veracity, in some measure as the law of the magistrate operates in the case of justice. But, as in the latter case, a man may be unjust in the sight of God and of his own conscience without transgressing the letter of any statute, so in the former, without forfeiting his character as a gentleman, he may often incur all the guilt of a liar and an impostor. Is it, in a moral view, more criminal to misrepresent a fact, than to impose on the world by what we know to be an unsound or a fallacious argument? Is it, in a moral view, more criminal to mislead another by a *verbal* lie, than by actions which convey a false idea of our intentions? Is it, in a moral view, more criminal, or is it more inconsistent with the dignity of a man of true honour, to defraud men in a private transaction by an incorrect or erroneous statement of circumstances, than to mislead the public to their own ruin by those wilful deviations from truth into which we see men daily led by views of interest or ambition, or by the spirit of political faction? Numberless cases, in short, may be fancied, in which our only security for truth is the virtuous disposition of the individual, and where the restraint of public opinion has little or no influence. Perhaps I should not go too far were I to affirm, that, as there is no duty of which the gross and ostensible practice is so effectually secured by the manners of modern times, so there is none of the obligations of which mankind seem in general to be so insensible, considered as moral agents, and accountable to God for their thoughts and intentions.

Among the various causes which have conspired to relax our moral principles on this important article, the facility which the press affords us in modern times of addressing the world by means of anonymous publications, is probably one of the most powerful. The salutary restraint which a regard to character imposes, in most cases, on our moral deviations, is here withdrawn; and we have no security for the fidelity of the writer, but his disinterested love of truth and of mankind. The palpable and ludicrous misrepresentations of facts, to which we are accustomed from our infancy in the periodical prints of the day, gradually unhinge our faith in all such communica-

tions; and what we are every day accustomed to see, we cease in time to regard with due abhorrence. Nor is this the only moral evil resulting from the licentiousness of the press. The intentions of nature in appointing public esteem as the reward of virtue, and infamy as the punishment of vice, are in a great measure thwarted; and while the fairest characters are left open to the assaults of a calumny which it is impossible to trace to its author, the opinions of the public may be so divided by the artifices of hireling flatterers, with respect to men of the most profligate and abandoned lives, as to enable them not only to brave the censures of the world, but to retaliate with more than an equal advantage on the good name of those who have the rashness to accuse them.

In a free government like ours, the liberty of the press has been often and justly called the Palladium of the Constitution; but it may reasonably be doubted whether this liberty would be at all impaired by a regulation, which, while it left the press perfectly open to every man who was willing openly to avow his opinions, rendered it impossible for any individual to publish a sentence without the sanction of his name. Upon this question, however, considered in a *political* point of view, I shall not presume to decide. Considered in a *moral* light, the advantages of such a regulation appear to be obvious and indisputable, and the *effect* could scarcely fail to have a most extensive influence on national manners.

Under this article of veracity in testimony might be considered a great variety of those abuses of speech which occur daily in ordinary conversation. But the consideration of these would lead me into details too minute for my general plan. And I quit the subject with the less reluctance, as it has been so ably discussed by Dr. Butler in his excellent *Discourse on the Government of the Tongue.*

Beside that love of truth which seems evidently to be an original principle of the mind, there are other laws of our nature which were plainly intended to secure the practice of veracity in our intercourse with our fellow-creatures. There are others, too, which, as they suppose the practice of this vir-

tue, may be regarded as intimations of that conduct which is conformable to the end and destination of our being. Such is that disposition to repose faith in testimony, which is coeval with the use of language. Without such a disposition the education of children would be impracticable; and accordingly, so far from being the result of experience, it seems to be, in the first instance, unlimited; nature intrusting its gradual correction to the progress of reason and of observation. This remark, which I think was first made by Dr. Reid,* has been since repeated and enforced by Mr. Smith in the *last* edition of his *Theory of Moral Sentiments.*[1] This author observes farther, that, "notwithstanding the lessons of caution communicated to us by experience, there is scarcely a man to be found who is not more credulous than he ought to be, and who does not, upon many occasions, give credit to tales which not only turn out to be perfectly false, but which a very moderate degree of reflection and attention might have taught him could not well be true. The natural disposition is always to believe. It is acquired wisdom and experience alone that teach incredulity, and they very seldom teach it enough. The wisest and most cautious of us all frequently gives credit to stories which he himself is afterwards both ashamed and astonished that he could possibly think of believing." This disposition to repose faith in testimony, bears a striking analogy, both in its origin and in its final cause, to our instinctive expectation of the continuance of those laws which regulate the course of physical events.

In infancy the principle of veracity is by no means so conspicuous as that of credulity, and it sometimes happens that a good deal of care is necessary to cherish it. But in such cases it will always be found that there is some indirect motive combined with the desire of social communication, such as fear, or vanity, or mischief, or sensuality. The same principle which prompts to social intercourse and to the use of speech, prompts

* [*Inquiry*, &c., Chap. VI. sect. xxiv.—*Works*, p. 195, *seq.* *On the Active Powers*, Essay III. Part i. chap. 2.—*Works*, p. 549.]

[1] See Vol. ii. p. 382. [Sixth edition, 1790.—Part VII. sect. iv.]

also to veracity. Nor is it probable that there is such a thing as falsehood uttered merely from the love of falsehood.

If this remark be just, it suggests an important practical rule in the business of education:—Not to attempt the cure of lying and deceit by general rules concerning the duty of veracity, or by punishments inflicted upon every single violation of it, but by studying to discover and remove the radical evil from which it springs, whether it be cowardice, or vanity, or mischief, or selfishness, or sensuality. Either of these, if allowed to operate, will in time unhinge the natural constitution of the mind, and produce a disregard to truth upon all occasions where a temporary convenience can be gained by the breach of it.

From these imperfect hints, it would appear that every breach of veracity indicates some latent vice or some criminal intention, which an individual is ashamed to avow. And hence the peculiar beauty of openness or sincerity, uniting in some degree in itself the graces of all the other moral qualities of which it attests the existence.

Fidelity to promises, which is commonly regarded as a branch of veracity, is perhaps more properly a branch of justice; but this is merely a question of arrangement, and of little consequence to our present purpose. If a person gives his promise, intending to perform, but fails in the execution, his fault is strictly speaking a breach of justice. As there is a natural faith in testimony, so there is a natural expectation excited by a promise. When I excite this expectation, and lead other men to act accordingly, I convey a right to the performance of my promise, and I act unjustly if I fail in performing it.

If a person promises, not intending to perform, he is guilty of a complication of injustice and falsehood; for although a declaration of present intention does not amount to a promise, every promise involves a declaration of present intention.

These observations may suffice with respect to the duties which have our fellow-creatures for their objects. I have by no means attempted a complete enumeration, which would

have unavoidably engaged me in an illustration of the hackneyed topics of practical morality. What I had chiefly in view was to show, that, even among those duties which have a reference to mankind, there are several which cannot be resolved into that of benevolence.

The duties which I have mentioned are all independent of any particular relation between us and other men. But there are a great variety of other duties resulting from such relations; the duties (for example) of Friendship and of Patriotism, besides those relative duties which moralists have distinguished by the titles of Economical and Political. To attempt an enumeration of these, would lead into the details of practical Ethics.

CHAPTER IV.

GENERAL REMARKS ON THIS CLASS OF OUR DUTIES.

PRUDENCE, Temperance, and Fortitude, are no less requisite for enabling us to discharge our social duties, than for securing our own private happiness:[1] But as they do not necessarily imply any reference to our fellow-creatures, they seem to belong most properly to this third branch of virtue.

An illustration of the nature and tendency of these qualities and of the means by which they are to be improved and confirmed, although a most important article of ethics, does not lead to any discussions of so abstract a kind, as to require particular attention in a work of which brevity is a principal object. It is sufficient here to remark, that, independently of all considerations of utility, either to ourselves or to others, these qualities are approved of as right and becoming. Their utility, at the same time, or rather necessity, for securing the discharge of our other duties, adds greatly to the respect they command, and is certainly the chief ground of the obligation we lie under, to cultivate the habits by which they are formed.

A steady regard, in the conduct of life, to the happiness and perfection of our own nature, and a diligent study of the means by which these ends may be attained, is another duty belonging to this branch of virtue. It is a duty so important and

[1] "He who is qualified to promote the welfare of mankind," says Dr. Ferguson, "is neither a Sot, a Fool, nor a Coward."—*Essay on the History of Civil Society*, Part I. sect. vi.

comprehensive, that it leads to the practice of all the rest, and is therefore entitled to a very full and particular examination in a system of Moral Philosophy. Such an examination, while it leads our thoughts "to the end and aim of our being," will again bring under our review the various duties already considered; and by showing how they all conspire in recommending the same dispositions, will illustrate the unity of design in the human constitution, and the benevolent wisdom displayed in its formation. Other subordinate duties, besides, which it would be tedious to enumerate under separate titles, may thus be placed in a light more interesting and agreeable.

SECT. I.—OF THE DUTY OF EMPLOYING THE MEANS WE POSSESS TO SECURE OUR OWN HAPPINESS.

According to Dr. Hutcheson, our conduct, so far as it is influenced by self-love, is never the object of moral approbation. Even a regard to the pleasures of a good conscience he considered as detracting from the merit of those actions which it encourages us to perform.

That the principle of self-love (or, in other words, the desire of happiness) is neither an object of approbation nor of blame, is sufficiently obvious. It is inseparable from the nature of man as a rational and a sensitive being. It is, however, no less obvious, on the other hand, that this desire, considered as a principle of action, has by no means an uniform influence on the conduct. Our animal appetites, our affections, and the other inferior principles of our nature, interfere as often with self-love as with benevolence, and mislead us from our own happiness as much as from the duties we owe to others.

In these cases every spectator pronounces, that we *deserve* to suffer for our folly and indiscretion; and we ourselves, as soon as the tumult of passion is over, feel in the same manner. Nor is this remorse merely a sentiment of regret for having missed that happiness which we might have enjoyed. We are dissatisfied, not only with our condition, but with our conduct;

—with our having forfeited by our own imprudence what we might have attained.[1]

It is true that we do not feel so warm an indignation against the neglect of private good, as against perfidy, cruelty, and injustice. The reason probably is, that imprudence commonly carries its own punishment along with it; and our resentment is disarmed by pity. Indeed, as that habitual regard to his own happiness, which every man feels, except when under the influence of some violent appetite, is a powerful check on imprudence, it was less necessary to provide an additional punishment for this vice in the indignation of the world.

From the principles now stated, it follows, that, in a person who believes in a future state, the criminality of every bad action is aggravated by the imprudence with which it is accompanied.

It follows, also, that the punishments annexed by the civil magistrate to particular actions render the commission of them more criminal than it would otherwise be; insomuch, that if an action, in itself perfectly indifferent, were prohibited by some arbitrary law, under a severe penalty, the commission of that action (unless we were called to it by some urgent consideration of duty) would be criminal, not merely on account of the obedience which a subject owes to established authority, but on account of the regard which every man ought to feel for his life and reputation. To forge the handwriting of another with a fraudulent intention is undoubtedly a crime, independently of positive institutions; and it becomes still more criminal in a commercial country like ours, on account of the extensive mischiefs which may arise from it. It is a crime, however, not of greater magnitude than many other kinds of commercial fraud that might be mentioned. If the King, for example, grants his patent to a subject for a particular invention, and another counterfeits it, and makes use of his name, stamp, and coat of arms, he not only injures an individual, but imposes on the public. Abstracting, therefore, from positive law, the criminality of the latter act is fully as great as that of

[1] See Butler's *Dissertation on the Nature of Virtue.*

the former. As the law, however, has made the one act capital, and the other not, but only subjected the person who commits it to pecuniary damages to the individual he has injured, the forgery of a deed becomes incomparably more criminal in a moral view than the counterfeit of a patent invention. A good man, indeed, will neither do the one nor the other. But the man who adds to a fraudulent disposition an imprudent disregard to his own life and character, is undoubtedly the more guilty of the two, and meets his fate with much less sympathy from others than he would receive, if he had committed the same act without knowing its consequences.

SECT. II.—OF HAPPINESS. SYSTEMS OF THE GRECIAN SCHOOLS ON THE SUBJECT.

The most superficial observation of life is sufficient to convince us, that Happiness is not to be attained by giving every appetite and desire the gratification they demand; and that it is necessary for us to form to ourselves some plan or system of conduct, in subordination to which all other objects are to be pursued.

To ascertain what this system ought to be, is a problem which has in all ages employed the speculations of philosophers. Among the ancients, the question concerning the SOVEREIGN GOOD was the principal subject of controversy which divided the schools; and it was treated in such a manner as to involve almost every other question of ethics. The opinions maintained with respect to it by some of their sects, comprehend many of the most important truths to which the inquiry leads, and leave little to be added, but a few corrections and limitations of their conclusions.

These opinions may be all reduced to *three;* those of the Epicureans, of the Stoics, and of the Peripatetics: And, indeed, it does not seem possible to form a conception of any scheme of happiness which may not be referred to one or other of these three systems.

[SUBSECT.] I.—The fundamental principle of the *Epicurean* system was, that bodily pleasure and pain were the sole ultimate objects of desire and aversion. These were desired and shunned on their own account; everything else from its tendency to procure the one of these, or to save us from the other. *Power*, (for example,) *riches*, *reputation*, even the *virtues* themselves, were not desirable for their own sake, but were valuable merely as being instrumental to procure us the objects of our natural desires. "They who place the *sovereign good* in *virtue* alone, and who, dazzled by words, overlook the intentions of nature, will be delivered from this greatest of all errors, if they will only listen to Epicurus. As to these rare and excellent qualities on which you set so high a value, who is there that would consider them as objects either of praise or of imitation, unless from a belief that they are instrumental in adding to the sum of our pleasures? For as we prize the medical art, not on its own account, but as subservient to the preservation of health, and the art of the pilot, not for the skill he displays, but as it diminishes the dangers of navigation, so also *wisdom*, which is the art of living, would be coveted by none if it were altogether unprofitable, whereas, now, it is an object of general pursuit, from a persuasion that it both guides us to our best enjoyments, and points out to us the most effectual means for their attainment."[1]

In the passage which immediately follows this quotation, Cicero proceeds to state particularly the reasonings of Epicurus concerning the different *virtues*, which he has done not only in a manner extremely pleasing and interesting, but completely satisfactory. Indeed I do not know of anything more valuable

[1] "Qui summum bonum in una *virtute* ponunt, et splendore nominis capti, quid natura postulet, non intelligunt, errore maximo si Epicurum audire voluerint liberabuntur. Istæ enim vestræ eximiæ, pulchræque virtutes, nisi voluptatem efficerent, quis eas aut laudabiles aut expetendas arbitraretur? Ut enim medicorum scientiam non ipsius artis, sed bonæ valetudinis causa probamus; et gubernatoris ars, quia bene navigandi rationem habet, utilitate non arte laudatur; sic *sapientia*, quæ ars vivendi putanda est, non expeteretur, si nihil efficeret: nunc expetitur, quod est tanquam artifex conquirendæ et comparandæ voluptatis."—Cicero, *De Finibus*, I. xiii.

that the ancients have left us, than these philosophical works of Cicero, considered as authentic records of the ethical disquisitions of the Grecian schools.[1]

All the pleasures and pains of the *mind* (according to Epicurus) are derived from the recollection and anticipation of *bodily* pleasures and pains; but this recollection and anticipation he considered as contributing much more to our happiness or misery on the whole, than the pleasures and pains themselves. His philosophy was indeed directed chiefly to inculcate this truth, and to withdraw our solicitude from the pleasures and pains themselves which are not in our power, to the regulation of our recollections and anticipations, which depend upon ourselves. He placed happiness, therefore, in ease of body and tranquillity of mind, but much more in the latter than in the former, insomuch that he affirmed a wise man might be happy in the midst of bodily torments. "Hear," says Cicero, "the language of Epicurus on his deathbed. Epicurus to Hermachus, greeting. While I am passing the last day of my life, and *that* the happiest, I write this epistle, oppressed at the same time with so many and such acute maladies, that it is scarcely possible to conceive that my sufferings are susceptible of augmentation. All these, however, are amply compensated by the mental joy I derive from the recollection of the reasonings and discoveries of which I am the author."[2] The concluding sentence of the letter does more honour to Epicurus than any other part of it. "But *you*, as is

[1] The Philosophical Works of Cicero were so highly valued by Mr. Smith, that, when he was Professor of Moral Philosophy at Glasgow, he made the Books *De Finibus* the subject of a separate course of lectures, which he gave annually to his students. Of these lectures, (in delivering which he trusted entirely to extempore elocution,) I have heard some of his pupils who were very competent to judge, speak with enthusiastic admiration; among others Mr. Millar, Professor of Law, Lord Cullen, and Lord Craig.

[2] Audi moriens quid dicat Epicurus. —"Epicurus Hermacho S.—Cum ageremus (inquit) vitæ beatum et eundem supremum diem scribebamus hæc. Tanti autem morbi adérant vesicæ et viscerum, ut nihil ad eorum magnitudinem possit accedere. Compensabatur tamen cum his omnibus animi lætitia, quam capiebam memoriâ rationum inventorumque nostrorum."—*De Finibus*, II. xxx.

worthy of your good will towards me and philosophy, let it be your business to consider yourself as the guardian and protector of the children of Metrodorus."[1]

It is unnecessary for me to enter into a particular examination of these doctrines, which have been obviously suggested by that excessive love of simplicity in the explanation of appearances which has given rise to so many erroneous theories both in physics and morals. The system of Epicurus, however, although it places morality in a wrong foundation, and employs a language with respect to happiness very liable to abuse,—a language which, (as Cicero remarks, "savours of nothing magnificent, nothing generous,")[2] bears at least very honourable testimony to the tendency of the virtues to promote happiness even in *this* life, since he imagined it was from *this* tendency they derived all their value. And, accordingly, Mr. Smith remarks, that "Cicero, the great enemy of the Epicurean system, borrows from it his most agreeable proofs, that Virtue alone is sufficient to secure happiness. And Seneca, though a Stoic, the sect most opposite to that of Epicurus, yet quotes this philosopher more frequently than any other."*

Epicurus himself is represented as a person of inoffensive and even amiable manners. He is said to have taught his philosophy in a garden, where he lived a temperate and quiet life, enjoying what Thomson calls "the glad poetic ease of Epicurus,—seldom understood." He died at an advanced age, and was so much beloved and esteemed by his followers, that his birth-day was annually celebrated as a festival. His private virtues, however, were probably in a great measure the effect of a happy natural constitution; for his philosophy, besides destroying all those supports of morality that religion affords, tended avowedly to recommend a life of indolent and selfish indulgence, and a total abstraction from the concerns

[1] "Sed tu ut dignum est tua erga me, et erga philosophiam voluntate ab adolescentulo suscepta, fac ut Metrodori tueare liberos."—(Ibid.) [The substance of] the same letter is to be found in Diogenes Laertius, Lib. X. [?? xix. xx.]

[2] "Nihil magnificum, nihil generosum sapit." [*De Finibus*, Lib. I. c. vii.]

* [*Theory of Moral Sentiments*, Vol. II. p. 305, sixth edition. Part VII. sect. ii. chap. 4; in the older editions, Part VI. sect. ii. chap. 4.]

and duties of the world. Accordingly we find that many of his disciples brought so much discredit on their principles, by the dissoluteness of their lives, that the word *Epicurean* came gradually to be understood as characteristical of a person devoted to sensual gratifications. It is worthy of remark, too, that it was from the speculative opinions of this sect that the looseness of their moral principles arose; or rather, the former were inculcated with a view to the justification of the latter. Such was the reasoning of Trimalchio, (in Petronius,) who, when a servant, had brought into the banquet a silver skeleton and set it on the table, exclaimed,—

> "Heu, heu nos miseros! quam totus homuncio nil est!
> Sic erimus cuncti, postquam nos auferet Orcus;
> Ergo vivamus, dum licet esse, bene."

The same sentiment is well expressed by Cowley in an imitation of Anacreon.

> "Crown me with roses whilst I live,
> *Now* your wines and ointments give;
> *After* death I nothing crave;
> All are Stoics in the grave."*

The influence which these principles had on the manners of the later Romans has been remarked by many writers; and it is not a little curious that it was clearly foreseen ages before by their virtuous and enlightened progenitors. This fact, which has not been sufficiently attended to, deserves the serious consideration of those who are disposed to call in question the effect of speculative opinions on national character. I shall make no apology, therefore, for entering into some slight details upon the subject.

It was in the year of Rome 471, and during the consulate of Fabricius, that the Romans seem to have received the first notice of the Epicurean doctrines. At that period the Tarentines had the address to instigate the Samnites, and almost all the other Italian states, to take arms against the Republic, and

* [We might think all of these, &c., only feeble paraphrases of *The Wisdom of Solomon*, ii. 1-9. See also *Isaiah* xxii. 13; and 1 *Corinthians* xv. 32.—*Ed.*]

also prevailed on Pyrrhus, King of Epirus, to give them his assistance. In the course of the war, Fabricius, with two other persons of high rank, were sent to Pyrrhus's court, to treat with him about an exchange of prisoners; and it was at a public entertainment given to them upon that occasion that Cineas, his minister and favourite, gave the Roman ambassadors a general idea of the philosophical principles which Epicurus had begun to teach at Athens about twenty years before.

The effect which this conversation had on the minds of the Roman ambassadors is an instructive fact in the history of philosophy. We are often desirous to know how a particular opinion would strike a man of plain understanding the first time it was proposed to him. It is an experiment, however, that we have but seldom an opportunity of making, as it is impossible to make the vulgar comprehend the terms of a speculative controversy, and as the judgments of the learned are commonly in some degree warped by education. An opinion, however absurd, that we have been accustomed to hear from infancy, and with which we connect the names of men eminent for genius and knowledge, even although we should reject it as erroneous, may still have some influence in unsettling our notions, and certainly will not appear to us so palpably ridiculous as it would do to a person to whom it is altogether new. The rage of disputation which prevailed in Greece seems in this way to have hurt the understandings of some of their best philosophers; and the case is but too similar with many in modern Europe. It is curious, therefore, to consider the light in which the philosophy of Epicurus appeared to Fabricius and his friends;—men of cultivated minds, and at the same time unperverted by the refinements of sophistry, and perfectly acquainted, both from their own experience and the observation of their countrymen, with those practical principles which are favourable to active and heroic virtue. With respect to this point Cicero has enabled us to form a judgment from the following anecdote, which he has recorded in his *Treatise on Old Age.*

"I have frequently heard from some of my friends, who were

much my seniors," says Cato to Scipio and Lælius, "a traditionary anecdote concerning Fabricius. They assured me, that, in the early part of their life, they were told by certain very old men of their acquaintance, that when Fabricius was ambassador at the court of Pyrrhus he expressed great astonishment at the account given him by Cineas of a philosopher at Athens, who maintained that the love of pleasure was universally the leading motive of all human actions. My informer added, that, when Fabricius related this fact to M. Curius and Titus Coruncanius, they both joined in wishing that Pyrrhus and the whole Samnite nations might become converts to this extraordinary doctrine, as the people who were infected with such unmanly principles could not fail, they thought, of proving an easy conquest to their enemies. M. Curius had been intimately connected with Publius Decius, who, in his fourth consulate, (which was five years before the former entered upon that office,) gloriously sacrificed his life to the preservation of his country. This generous patriot was personally known both to Fabricius and to Coruncanius; and they were convinced, by what they experienced in their own breasts, as well as by the illustrious example of Decius, that there is in certain actions an intrinsic rectitude and obligation which, with a noble contempt of what the world calls *pleasure*, every great and generous mind will steadily keep in view, as a sacred rule of conduct, and as the chief concern of life."[1]

To this anecdote it may not be improper to add another which occurs in a later period of the Roman history. In the year of Rome 599, the Athenians sent to that city a deputation of three of their principal philosophers, at the head of whom was Carneades, a celebrated patron of the Academical sect. While the ambassadors were waiting for their answer, Carneades amused himself in displaying his ingenuity and eloquence to the Roman youth, by endeavouring to prove that justice and injustice derived their origin from positive institutions, and that there was no foundation for a distinction between them in the nature of man. The following day,

[1] See Melmoth's Translation of Cicero *On Old Age*. [In the original, cap. xiii.]

according to the practice of his sect, he took up the opposite side of the question, and attempted to refute his former reasonings. Cato, the censor, was present on both occasions, and was so apprehensive of the consequences of unsettling the opinions of his countrymen on points of so important and sacred a nature, that he never rested till the ambassadors received their final answer, and were dismissed from Rome.[1]

[SUBSECT.] II.—In opposition to the Epicurean doctrines already stated on the subject of happiness, the *Stoics* placed the supreme good in Rectitude of conduct, without any regard to the event. They did not, however, as has been often supposed, recommend an indifference to external objects, or a life of inactivity and apathy. On the contrary, they taught that nature pointed out to us certain objects of choice and of rejection, and amongst these some to be *more* chosen and avoided than others; and that Virtue consisted in choosing and rejecting objects according to their intrinsic value. They admitted that health was to be preferred to sickness, riches to poverty; the prosperity of our family, of our friends, of our country, to their adversity; and they allowed, nay, they recommended, the most strenuous exertions to accomplish these desirable ends. They only contended these objects should be pursued not as the constituents of our happiness, but because we believe it to be agreeable to nature that we should pursue them; and that, therefore, when we have done our utmost, we should regard the event as indifferent.

[1] Ibid.

The system of morals generally ascribed to Epicurus is said to have been borrowed from Aristippus, who also taught that happiness consisted in bodily pleasure; but it is probable, as Mr. Smith observes, that his manner of applying his principles was altogether his own.—(*Theory*, &c., Vol. II. p. 268, 6th edition.) Indeed, we have the testimony of Diogenes Laertius that Aristippus taught that happiness consisted in the *present* pleasures of the body, and not in any mental refinements on these pleasures, according to the system of Epicurus.—*Vitæ Philos.* II. 187. [Lib. II. § 87, *seq.*] The life of Epicurus has been written in modern times by Gassendi, who attempted to revive his philosophy, and by Bayle. Heineccius also mentions a book entitled, Jacob Rondellus, *De Vita et de Moribus Epicuri*, which has never fallen in my way. —Amst. 1684.

That this is a fair representation of the stoical doctrine has been fully proved by Mr. Harris in the very learned and judicious notes on his *Dialogue concerning Happiness;** a performance which, although not entirely free from Mr. Harris's peculiarities of thought and style, does him so much honour, both as a writer and a moralist, that we cannot help regretting, while we peruse it, that he should so often have wasted his ingenuity and learning upon scholastic subtilties, equally inapplicable to the pursuits of science, and to the business of life.

"The word πάθος," he observes, "which we usually render *a passion*, means, in the Stoic sense, *a perturbation*, and is always so translated by Cicero;" and the epithet ἀπαθής, when applied to the *wise man*, does not mean an exemption from passion, but an exemption from that perturbation which is founded on erroneous opinions. The testimony of Epictetus† is express to this purpose. "I am not," says he, "to be apathetic like a statue, but I am withal to observe relations both the natural and adventitious; as the man of religion, as the son, as the brother, as the father, as the citizen." And immediately before he tells us, "That a perturbation in no other way ever arises but either when a desire is frustrated, or an aversion falls into that which it should avoid." "In which passage," says Harris, "it is observable that he does not make either desire, or aversion, πάθη, or perturbations, but only the cause of perturbations when erroneously conducted."

From a great variety of passages, which it is unnecessary for me to transcribe, Harris concludes, that "the Stoics, in the character of their Virtuous Man, included rational desire, aversion, and exultation; included love and parental affection, friendship, and a general benevolence to all mankind; and considered it as a duty arising from our very nature not to neglect the welfare of public society, but to be ever ready, according to our rank, to act either as the magistrate or as the private citizen."

Nor did they exclude wealth from among the objects of choice. The Stoic Hecato, in his *Treatise of Offices* quoted by

* [Note xlviii. *Works*, 4to ed. Vol. I. pp. 178-181.] † [Arriani, Lib. III. c. ii.]

Cicero, tells us, "That a wise man, while he abstains from doing anything contrary to the customs, laws, and institutions of his country, ought to attend to his own fortune. For we do not desire to be rich for ourselves only, but for our children, relations, and friends, and especially for the commonwealth, inasmuch as the riches of individuals are the wealth of a state."[1]—"Nay," says Cicero, "if the wise man could mend his condition by adding to the amplest possessions the poorest, meanest utensil, he would in no degree contemn it."[2]

From these quotations it sufficiently appears that the stoical system, so far from withdrawing men from the duties of life, was eminently favourable to active virtue. Its peculiar and distinguishing tenet was, that our happiness did not depend on the attainment of the objects of our choice, but on the part that we acted; but this principle was inculcated *not* to damp our exertions, but to lead us to rest our happiness only on circumstances which we ourselves could command. "If I am going to sail," says Epictetus,* "I choose the best ship and the best pilot, and I wait for the fairest weather that my circumstances and duty will allow. Prudence and propriety, the principles which the gods have given me for the direction of my conduct, require this of me, but they require no more; and if, notwithstanding, a storm arises, which neither the strength of the vessel nor the skill of the pilot are likely to withstand, I give myself no trouble about the consequences. All that I had to do is done already. The directors of my conduct never command me to be miserable, to be anxious, desponding, or afraid. Whether we are to be drowned or come to a harbour is the business of Jupiter, not mine. I leave it entirely to his determination, nor ever break my rest with considering which

[1] "Sapientis esse, nihil contra mores, leges, instituta facientem, habere rationem rei familiaris. Neque enim solum nobis divites esse volumus, sed liberis, propinquis, amicis, maximeque reipublicæ; singulorum enim facultates et copiæ divitiæ sunt civitatis."—*De Officiis*, III. xv.

[2] "Si ad illam vitam, quæ cum virtute degatur, ampulla aut strigilis accedat, sumpturum sapientem eam vitam potius, cui hæc adjecta sint."—*De Finibus*, IV. xii.

* [Arriani *Dissert. Epict.*, Lib. II. cap. v.]

way he is likely to decide it, but receive whatever comes with equal indifference and security."[1]

We may observe farther, in favour of this noble system, that the scale of desirable objects which it exhibited was peculiarly calculated to encourage the social virtues. It represented indeed (in common with the theory of Epicurus) *self-love* as the great spring of human actions; but in the application of this erroneous principle to practice, its doctrines were favourable to the most enlarged, nay, to the most disinterested benevolence. It taught that the prosperity of *two* was preferable to that of *one;* that of a city to that of a family; and that of our country to all partial considerations. It was upon this very principle, added to a sublime sentiment of piety, that it founded its chief argument for an entire resignation to the dispensations of Providence. As all events are ordered by perfect wisdom and goodness, the Stoics concluded, that whatever happens is calculated to produce the greatest good possible to the universe in general. As it is agreeable to nature, therefore, that we should prefer the happiness of many to a few, and of all to that of many, they concluded that every event which happens is precisely that which we ourselves would have desired, if we had been acquainted with the whole scheme of the Divine administration. "In what sense," says Epictetus,* "are some things said to be according to our nature, and others contrary to it? It is in that sense in which we consider ourselves as separated and detached from all other things. For thus it may be said to be the nature of the foot to be always clean. But if you consider it as a foot, and not as something detached from the rest of the body, it must behove it sometimes to trample in the dirt, and sometimes to tread upon thorns, and sometimes, too, to be cut off for the sake of the whole body: and if it refuses this it is no longer a foot. Thus, too, ought we to conceive with respect to ourselves. What are you? A man. If you consider yourself as something separated and detached, it is

[1] Smith's Translation. *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, 6th edit. Vol. II. pp. 223, 224. [Part VII. sect. ii. chap. 1. In the older editions, Part VI. sect. ii. chap. 1.]

* [Arriani *Dissert. Epict.* L. II. c. v.]

agreeable to your nature to live to old age, to be rich, to be in health. But if you consider yourself as a man, and as a part of the whole, upon account of that whole it will behove you sometimes to be in sickness, sometimes to be exposed to the inconveniency of a sea voyage, sometimes to be in want, and at last perhaps to die before your time. Why then do you complain? Don't you know that by doing so, as the foot ceases to be a foot, so you cease to be a man?"*

"O World," says Antoninus,† "all things are suitable to me which are suitable to thee. Nothing is too early or too late for me which is seasonable for thee. All is fruit to me which thy seasons bring forth. From thee are all things; in thee are all things; for thee are all things. Shall any man say, *O beloved city of Cecrops!* and wilt not thou say, *O beloved city of God!*"[1]

In this tendency of the Stoical philosophy to encourage the active and social virtues, it was most remarkably distinguished from the system of Epicurus. The latter, indeed, seems (as it was first taught) to have been the reverse of that system of sensuality and of libertinism, to which the epithet *Epicurean* is commonly applied in modern times; but it was at best a system of selfishness and prudent indulgence, which placed happiness in a seclusion from care, and in an indifference to all the concerns of mankind. By the Stoics, on the contrary, virtue was supposed to consist in the affectionate performance of every good office towards their fellow-creatures, and in full resignation to Providence for everything independent of their own choice.

It is remarked by Dr. Ferguson, that "their different schemes of theology clearly pointed out their opposite plans of morality also. Both admitted the existence of God. But to one, the Deity was a retired essence enjoying *itself*, and far removed from any work of creation and Providence.

"The other considered the Deity as the principle of existence

* [Smith's Translation. *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, Vol. II. p. 220. Part VII. sect. ii. chap. 1. In the older editions, Part VI. sect. ij. chap. 1.]

† [*De Rebus Suis*, Lib. IV. sect. xxiii.]

[1] Smith's Translation. *Theory*, &c., Vol. II. p. 254.

and of order in the universe, from whom all intelligence proceeds, and to whom all intelligence will return; whose power is the irresistible energy of wisdom and of goodness, ever present and ever active; bestowing on man the faculty of reason and the freedom of choice, that he may learn, in acting for the general good, to imitate the Divine nature; and that, in respect of events independent of his will, he may acquiesce in the determination of Providence."

"In conformity with these principles, one sect recommended seclusion from all the cares of family or state. The other recommended an active part in all the concerns of our fellow-creatures, and the steady exertion of a mind benevolent, courageous, and temperate. *Here* the sects essentially differed, *not* in words, as has sometimes been alleged, but in the views which they entertained of a plan for the conduct of human life. The Epicurean was a deserter from the cause of his fellow-creatures, and might justly be reckoned a traitor to the community of nature, of mankind, and even of his country."

"The Stoic enlisted himself as a willing instrument in the hand of God for the good of his fellow-creatures. For himself, the cares and attentions which this object required were his *pleasures*, and the continued exertion of a beneficent affection, his *welfare* and his prosperity."[1]

Such was the philosophy of the Stoics;—"a philosophy," says Mr. Smith, "which affords the noblest lessons of magnanimity, is the best school of heroes and patriots; and to the greater part of whose precepts there can be no other objection but this honourable one, that they teach us to aim at a perfection altogether beyond the reach of human nature."*

I cannot, however, help remarking, that this is by no means an *objection* to their system; for it is the business of the moralist to exhibit a standard far above the reach of our possible attainments. If he did otherwise, he must recommend errors and imperfections. "It has sometimes happened," says

[1] *Principles of Moral and Political Science*, Vol. II. pp. 4, 5. [Part II. chap. i. sect. 1.]—See also Dr. Ferguson's *Roman History*, ch. xviii. [B. III. ch. iv.]

* [*Theory*, &c., Part I. sect. iii. chap. 3, *older* edition only.]

Quintilian, speaking of eloquence and the fine arts, and the observation holds equally with respect to every other pursuit, "that great things have been accomplished by him who was striving at what was above his power."[1] To the same purpose it is well said by Seneca: "It is the mark of a generous spirit to aim at what is lofty; to attempt what is arduous; and ever to keep in view what it is impossible for the most splendid talents to accomplish."[2]

The Stoics themselves were sensible of the weaknesses inseparable from humanity. "Neither indeed," says Cicero, speaking the language of a Stoic, "when the two Decii or the two Scipios are mentioned as *brave men*, nor when Aristides or Fabricius are denominated *just*, is an example of fortitude in the former, or of justice in the latter, proposed as exactly conformable to the precepts of wisdom. For none of them were *wise* in that sense in which we apply the epithet to *the wise man*. Nor were Cato and Lælius such, although they were honoured with the appellation. No, not even the Seven Wise Men of Greece, who have been so widely celebrated, although, *from the habitual discharge of middle duties*, (*ex mediorum officiorum frequentia*,) all of them bore a certain similitude to the ideal character."[3] Seneca also mentions it as a general confession of the greatest philosophers, that the doctrine they taught was not "quemadmodum ipsi viverent, sed quemadmodum vivendum est."[4] "I know," says Epictetus, "that I shall not be Milo, and yet I neglect not my body; nor Crœsus, and yet I neglect not my estate; nor in general do we desist from the proper care of anything through despair of arriving at that which is supreme."[5]

[1] "Evenit non nunquam, ut aliquid grande inveniat, qui semper quærit quod nimium est."—*Instit.* II. xii.

[2] "Generosa res est—conari alta, tentare et mente majora concipere, quam quæ etiam ingenti animo adornatis effici possint."—*De Vita Beata*, c. xx.

[3] "Nec vero, cum duo Decii, aut duo Scipiones, fortes viri commemorantur, aut cum Fabricius, Aristidesve justus nominatur; aut ab illis fortitudinis, aut ab his justitiæ tamquam *a sapientibus*, petitur exemplum. Nemo enim horum *sic sapiens est*, ut *sapientem volumus intelligi*. Nec ii qui sapientes habiti sunt et nominati, M. Cato et C. Lælius, sapientes fuerunt; ne illi quidem septem: Sed ex mediorum officiorum frequentia, similitudinem quandam gerebant, speciemque sapientum."—*De Officiis*, Lib. III. c. iv.

[4] *De Vita Beata*, c. xviii.

[5] Arriani *Dissert. Epict.* Lib. I. c. ii.

In the writings, indeed, of some of the Stoics, we meet with some absurd and violent paradoxes about the perfect felicity of the wise man on the one hand, and the *equality of misery* among all those who fall short of this ideal character on the other. "As all the actions of the wise man were perfect, so all those of the man who had not arrived at this supreme wisdom were faulty and equally faulty. As one truth could not be more true, nor one falsehood more false than another, so an honourable action could not be more honourable, nor a shameful one more shameful than another. As, in shooting at a mark, the man who had missed it by an inch had equally missed it with him who had done so by a hundred yards, so the man who, in what appeared to us the most insignificant action, had acted improperly, and without a sufficient reason, was equally faulty with him who had done so in what appears to us the most important; the man who has killed a cock (for example) improperly, and without a sufficient reason, with him who had murdered his father.*

"It is not, however," continues Mr. Smith, "by any means probable that these paradoxes formed a part of the original principles of *Stoicism*, as taught by Zeno and Cleanthes. It is much more probable that they were added to it by their disciple, Chrysippus, whose genius seems to have been more fitted for systematizing the doctrines of his preceptors, and adorning them with the imposing appendages of artificial definitions and divisions, than for imbibing the sublime spirit which they breathed. Such a man may very easily be supposed to have understood too literally some animated and exaggerated expressions of his masters in describing the happiness of the man of Perfect Virtue, and the unhappiness of whatever fell short of that character."†

That these paradoxes were not adopted by the most rational admirers of the Stoical philosophy we have complete evidence; for we find them treating expressly of those *imperfect* virtues [*καθήκοντα*] which are attained by inferior proficients in wisdom,

* [*Theory of Moral Sentiments*, Part VII. sect. 2, chap. i. Sixth edition, Vol. II. p. 258.]

† [Ibid. p. 260.]

and which they did not dignify with the name of *rectitudes*, [*κατορθώματα*,] but distinguished by the epithets of *proper*, *fit*, and *decent*.

Such virtues are called by Cicero *officia*, and by Seneca *convenientia*. They are treated of by Cicero in his *Offices*, and are said to have been the subject of a book (now lost) by Marcus Brutus.

This apology, however, it must be confessed, will not extend to all the errors of the Stoical school. In particular, it will not extend to the notions it inculcated on the subject of *suicide*. But for these errors, if it is impossible to apologize, we may at least account in some measure by the peculiar circumstances of the times when this philosophy arose, and which infected with the same spirit, though perhaps not in an equal degree, the peaceable and indolent followers of Epicurus. "During the age," says Mr. Smith, "in which flourished the founders of all the principal sects of ancient philosophy;—during the Peloponnesian war, and for many ages after its conclusion,—all the different republics of Greece were at home almost always distracted by the most furious factions, and abroad involved in the most sanguinary wars, in which each sought not merely superiority or dominion, but either completely to extirpate all its enemies, or, what was not less cruel, to reduce them into the vilest of all states—that of domestic slavery. The smallness of the greater part of those states, too, rendered it to each of them no very improbable event, that it might itself fall into that very calamity which it had so frequently inflicted or attempted to inflict on its neighbours. In this disorderly state of things the most perfect innocence, joined to the highest rank and the greatest services to the public, could give no security to any man, that even at home and among his fellow-citizens, he was not, at some time or other, from the prevalence of some hostile and furious faction, to be condemned to the most cruel and ignominious punishment. If he was taken prisoner of war, or if the city of which he was a member was conquered, he was exposed, if possible, to still greater injuries. As an American savage, therefore, prepares his death-song, and considers how

he should act when he has fallen into the hands of his enemies, and is by them put to death in the most lingering tortures, and amidst the insults and derisions of all the spectators, so a Grecian patriot or hero could not avoid frequently employing his thoughts in considering what he ought both to suffer and to do in banishment, in captivity, when reduced to slavery, when put to the torture, when brought to the scaffold. It was the business of their philosophers to prepare the death-song which the Grecian patriots and heroes might make use of on the proper occasions; and of all the different sects it must, I think, be acknowledged, that the Stoics had prepared by far the most animated and spirited song."[1]

After all, it is impossible to deny that there is some foundation for a censure which Lord Bacon has somewhere passed on this celebrated sect. "Certainly," says he, "the Stoics bestowed too much cost on death, and by their preparations made it more fearful."* At least, I suspect this may be the tendency of *some* passages in their writings, in such a state of society as that in which we live; but in perusing them we ought always to remember the circumstances of those men to whom they were addressed, and which are so eloquently described in the observations just quoted from Mr. Smith. The practical reflection which Bacon adds to this censure is invaluable, and is strictly conformable to the spirit of the Stoical system, although he seems to state it by way of contrast to their principles. "It is as natural," says he, "to die as to be born; and to a little infant perhaps the one is as painful as the other. HE THAT DIES IN AN EARNEST PURSUIT IS LIKE ONE THAT IS WOUNDED IN HOT BLOOD, WHO FOR A TIME SCARCE FEELS THE HURT; AND THEREFORE, A MIND FIXED AND BENT UPON SOMEWHAT THAT IS *GOOD* DOTH BEST AVERT THE DOLOURS OF DEATH."†

Upon the whole, notwithstanding the imperfections of this system, and the paradoxes which disgrace it in some accounts of it that have descended to our times, it cannot be disputed, that its leading doctrines are agreeable to the purest principles

[1] *Theory*, &c., 6th ed. Vol. II. p. 236, *seq.*

* [*Essays*, Essay ii.]

† [Ibid.]

of morality and religion. Indeed, they all terminate in one maxim: That we should not make the attainment of things external an ultimate object, but place the business of life in doing our duty, and leave the care of our happiness to him who made us. Nor does the whole merit of these doctrines consist in their purity. It is doing them no more than justice to say, that they were more completely systematical in all their parts, and more ingeniously, as well as eloquently, supported, than any thing else that remains of ancient philosophy.

I must not conclude these observations on the Stoical system, without taking notice of the practical effects it produced on the characters of many of its professors. It was the precepts of this school which rendered the supreme power in the hands of Marcus Aurelius a blessing to the human race; and which secured the private happiness, and elevated the minds of Helvidius and Thrasea under a tyranny by which their country was oppressed. Nor must it be forgotten, that in the last struggles of Roman liberty, while the school of Epicurus produced Cæsar, that of Zeno produced Cato and Brutus. The one sacrificed mankind to himself; the others sacrificed themselves to mankind.

> " . . . Hi mores, hæc duri immota Catonis
> Secta fuit, servare modum, finemque tenere,
> Naturamque sequi, patriæque impendere vitam;
> Nec sibi, sed toti genitum se credere mundo."[1]

The sentiment of *President Montesquieu* on this subject is well known. " Never," says he, " were any principles more worthy of human nature, and more proper to form the good citizen, than those of the Stoics; and if I could for a moment cease to recollect that I am a Christian, I should not be able to hinder myself from ranking the destruction of the sect of Zeno among the misfortunes that have befallen the human race."[2]

[1] Lucan, *Phars.* ii. 380.

[2] " Les diverses sectes de philosophie chez les anciens étoient des espèces de religion. Il n'y en a jamais eu dont les principes fussent plus dignes de l'homme et plus propres à former des gens de bien, que celle des Stoïciens; et si je pouvois un moment cesser de penser que je suis Chrétien, je ne pourrois m'empêcher de mettre la destruction de la secte de Zénon au nombre des malheurs du genre-humain." — *Esprit. des Loix*, Liv. XXIV. chap. x.

[SUBSECT.] III.—The doctrine of the *Peripatetics* on this subject appears to have coincided with that of the *Pythagorean* school, who defined *Happiness* to be "*the Exercise of virtue in a prosperous life*," (Χρῆσις ἀρετῆς ἐν εὐτυχίᾳ);*—a definition like several others transmitted to us from the same source, which unites in a remarkable degree the merits of conciseness and of philosophical precision.

In confirmation of this doctrine, the Pythagorean school observed, that it was not the *mere possession* but the *exercise* of virtue that made men happy.[1] And for the proper exercise of virtue, they thought that good fortune was as necessary as light is for the exercise of the faculty of sight. The utmost length, accordingly, which they went was to say, that the virtuous man in adversity was *not miserable;* whereas the vicious and foolish were miserable in all situations of fortune. In another passage they say, that the difference between God and man is, that God is perfect in himself, and needs nothing from without; whereas the nature of man is imperfect and defective, and dependent on external circumstances. Although, therefore, we possess virtue, that is but the perfection of *one* part, namely, the mind; but as we consist both of body and mind, the body also must be perfect of its kind. Nor is that alone sufficient: but the prosperous exercise of virtue requires certain *externals;* such as wealth, reputation, friends, and, above all, a *well-constituted state;* for without that the rational

* [Χρῆσις ἀρετῆς ἐν εὐτυχίᾳ. These are the words of Archytas in the fragment of his book, *Concerning a Good and Happy Man*, (pp. 676, 678, Gale, 1688;) and in the fragment of his book, *Concerning Moral Instruction*, p. 696. See also the remains of Hippodamus, *Concerning Happiness*, pp. 661, 662; and those of Euryphamus, *Concerning Life*, pp. 668, 669. These are all preserved to us by Stobæus, and collected by Thomas Gale; but the Ethical fragments are even more manifestly spurious than the Physical and Logical treatises, or parts of treatises, which we have under the names of Pythagorean philosophers. The ingenious fabricators (or fabricator) are indebted to Aristotle, not Aristotle to the pretended authors.—*Ed.*]

[1] See the Fragments of this School, published in Gale's *Opuscula Mythologica, Physica et Ethica*. Amstel. 1688; [p. 657, *seq.* But in particular, for Mr. Stewart's reference, see the fragment of the Pseudo-Archytas, p. 696; and of the Pseudo-Euryphamus, p. 668.]

and social animal is imperfect, and unable to fulfil the purposes of its nature.

The difference between the *Peripatetics and Stoics* in these opinions is beautifully stated by Cicero, in a passage strongly expressive of the elevation of his own character, as well as highly honourable to the two sects, whose doctrines, while he *contrasts* them with each other, he plainly considered as both originating in the same pure and ardent zeal for the interests of morality. "Pugnant Stoici cum Peripateticis: alteri negant quidquam esse bonum nisi quod honestum sit; alteri, plurimum se et longe longeque plurimum tribuere honestati, sed tamen et in corpore et extra esse quædam bona. Et certamen honestum, et disputatio splendida."*

On a general review of the preceding articles in this section, it appears, (to use the words of Dr. Ferguson, [p. 298]) that all these sects acknowledged the necessity of virtue, or allowed, that, in every well-directed pursuit of happiness, the strictest regard to morality was required. The Stoics alone maintained that this regard itself was happiness; or that to run the course of an active, strenuous, wise, and beneficent mind, was itself the very good which we ought to pursue.

SECT. III.—ADDITIONAL REMARKS ON HAPPINESS.

From the slight view now given of the systems of philosophers with respect to the Sovereign Good, it may be assumed as an acknowledged and indisputable fact, that happiness arises chiefly from the mind. The Stoics undoubtedly expressed this too strongly when they said, that to a wise man external circumstances are indifferent. Yet it must be confessed, that happiness depends much less on these than is commonly imagined; and that, as there is no situation so prosperous as to exclude the torments of malice, cowardice, and remorse, so there is none so adverse as to withhold the enjoyments of a benevolent, resolute, and upright heart.

If, from the sublime idea of a perfectly wise and virtuous

* [*De Finibus*, Lib. II. cap. xxi.]

man, we descend to such characters as the world presents to us, some important limitations of the Stoical conclusions become necessary. Mr. Hume has justly remarked, that, "as in the bodily system, a *toothach* produces more violent convulsions of pain than *phthisis* or a *dropsy*, so, in the economy of the mind, although all vice be pernicious, yet the disturbance or pain is not measured out by nature with exact proportion to the degree of vice; nor is the man of highest virtue, even abstracting from external accidents, always the most happy. A gloomy and melancholy disposition is certainly, to our sentiments, a vice or imperfection; but as it may be accompanied with a great sense of honour and great integrity, it may be found in very worthy characters; though it is sufficient alone to imbitter life, and render the person afflicted with it completely miserable. On the other hand, a selfish villain may possess a spring and alacrity of temper, a certain *gaiety of heart*, which is rewarded much beyond its merit; and when attended with good fortune, will compensate for the uneasiness and remorse arising from all the other vices."*

Abstracting even from these considerations, and supposing a character as perfect as the frailty of human nature admits of, various mental qualities, which have no immediate connexion with moral desert, are necessary to insure happiness. In proof of this remark, it is sufficient to consider, how much our tranquillity is liable to be affected.

1. By our Temper;
2. By our Imagination;
3. By our Opinions; and,
4. By our Habits.

In all these respects the mind may be influenced to a great degree, by original constitution, or by early education; and when this influence happens to be unfavourable, it is not to be corrected at once by the precepts of philosophy. Much, however, may be done undoubtedly, in such instances, by our own persevering efforts; and, therefore, the particulars now enumerated deserve our attention, not only from their connexion

* [*Essays*, Vol. I. Part i. Ess. 18, The Sceptic.]

with the speculative question concerning the essentials of happiness, but on account of the practical conclusions to which the consideration of them may lead.

[SUBSECT.] I.—*Influence of the Temper on Happiness.*

The word *Temper* is used in different senses. Sometimes we apply to it the epithets *gay, lively, melancholy, gloomy;* on other occasions, the epithets, *fretful, passionate, sullen, cool, equable, gentle.* It is in the *last* sense we use it at present, to denote the habitual state of a man's mind in point of *irascibility;* or, in other words, to mark the habitual predominance of the *benevolent* or *malevolent* affections in his intercourse with his fellow-creatures.

The connexion between this part of the character of an individual, and the habitual state of his mind in point of happiness, is obvious from what was formerly observed concerning the pleasures and pains attached respectively to the exercise of our benevolent and malevolent affections. As nature has strengthened the social ties among mankind, by annexing a secret charm to every exercise of good-will and of kindness, so she has provided a check on all the discordant passions, by that agitation and disquiet which are their inseparable concomitants. This is true even with respect to resentment, how justly soever it may be provoked by the injurious conduct of others. It is always accompanied with an unpleasant feeling, which warns us, as soon as we have taken the necessary measures for our own security, to banish every sentiment of malice from the heart. On the due regulation of this part of our constitution, our happiness in life materially depends; and there is no part of it whatever where it is in our power, by our persevering efforts, to do more to cure our *constitutional* or our *acquired* infirmities.

Resentment was formerly distinguished into *instinctive* and *deliberate*, the latter of which (it was observed) has always a reference to the motives of the person against whom it is directed, and implies a sense of justice, or of moral good or evil.

In some men the animal or instinctive impulse is stronger than in others. Where this is the case, or where proper care has not been taken in early education to bring it under restraint, a quick or irascible temper is the consequence. This fault is frequently observable in affectionate and generous characters, and impairs their happiness, not so much by the effects it produces on their minds, as by the eventual misfortunes to which it exposes them.[1] The sentiments of ill-will which such men feel are only momentary, and the habitual state of their mind is benevolent and happy; but as their reason is the sport of every accident, the best dispositions of the heart can at no time give them any security that they shall not, before they sleep, experience some paroxysm of insanity, which shall close all their prospects of happiness for ever. A frequent and serious consideration of the fatal consequences which may arise from sudden and ungoverned passion, cannot fail to have some tendency to check its excesses. It is an infirmity which is often produced by some fault in early education; by allowing children to exercise authority over their dependents, and not providing for them, in the opposition of their equals, a sufficient discipline and preparation for the conflicts they may expect to struggle with in future life.

When the animal resentment does not immediately subside, it must be supported by an opinion of bad intention in its object; and, consequently, when this happens to an individual so habitually as to be characteristic of his temper, it indicates a disposition on *his* part to put unfavourable constructions on the actions of others, (or as we commonly express it,) *to take things by the wrong handle.* In some instances this may proceed from a settled conviction of the worthlessness of mankind; but in general it originates in self-dissatisfaction, occasioned by

[1] "Irascible men," says Aristotle, "though moved to passion too suddenly, in immoderate degrees, and on improper occasions, are yet easily pacified; if they be soon angry they are also soon pleased, which is the best circumstance attending them."—(*Ethica Nicom.* Lib. IV. cap. v.) Cicero states this still more strongly in a letter to Atticus:—"Irritabiles animos esse optimorum sæpe hominum, et eosdem placabiles; et esse hanc agilitatem, ut ita dicam, mollitiamque naturæ plerumque bonitatis."—*Ad Atticum*, Lib. I. ep. xvii.

the consciousness of vice or folly, which leads the person who feels it to withdraw his attention from himself, by referring the causes of his ill-humour to the imaginary faults of his neighbours. Such men do not wait till provocation is given them, but *look out* anxiously for occasions of quarrel, creating to themselves, by the help of imagination, an object suited to that particular humour they wish to indulge; and, when their resentment is once excited, they obstinately refuse to listen to anything that may be offered in the way of extenuation or apology. In feeble minds this displays itself in peevishness, which vents itself languidly upon any object it meets. In more vigorous and determined minds it produces violent and boisterous passion. For, as Butler has well remarked, both of these seem to be the operation of the same principle, appearing in different forms, according to the constitution of the individual. "In the one case, the humour discharges itself *at once;* in the other it is continually discharging."

There is, too, a species of misanthropy which is sometimes grafted on a worthy and benevolent heart. When the standard of moral excellence we have been accustomed to conceive is greatly elevated above the common attainments of humanity, we are apt to become too difficult and fastidious (if I may use the expression) in our *moral taste;* or, in plainer language, we become unreasonably censorious of the follies and vices of the age in which we live. In such cases it may happen that the native benevolence of the mind, by being habitually directed towards ideal characters, may prove a source of real disaffection and dislike to those with whom we associate. Such a disposition (when carried to an extreme) not only sours the temper, and dries up all the springs of innocent satisfaction which nature has so liberally provided for us in the common incidents of life, but, by withdrawing a man from active pursuits, renders all his talents and virtue useless to society.[1] The great

[1] A character of this description has furnished to Moliere the subject of his most finished comedy; and to Marmontel of one of his most agreeable and useful moral tales. The former of these is universally known as the *chef-d'œuvre* of the French stage; but the latter possesses also an uncommon degree of

nurse and cherisher of this species of misanthropy, is solitary contemplation; and the only effectual remedy is society and business, together with a habit of directing the attention rather to the improvement of our own characters, than to a jealous and suspicious examination of the motives which influence the conduct of our neighbours.

This last observation leads me to remark farther, that one great cause of this perversion of our nature, is a very common and fatal prejudice, which leads men to believe that the degree of their own virtue is proportioned to the justness and the liveliness of their moral feelings; whereas in truth virtue consists neither in liveliness of feeling, nor in rectitude of judgment, but in an habitual regard to our sense of duty in the conduct of life. To enlighten, indeed, our conscience with respect to the part which we ourselves have to act, and to cultivate that quick and delicate sense of propriety which may restrain us from every offence, how trifling soever it may appear, against the laws of morality, is an essential part of our duty; and what a strong sense of duty, aided by a sound understanding, will naturally lead to. But to exercise our powers of moral judgment and moral feeling on the character and conduct of our neighbours, is so far from being necessarily connected with our moral improvement, that it has frequently a tendency to withdraw our attention from the real state of our own characters; and to flatter us with a belief, that the degree in which we possess the different virtues, is proportioned to the indignation excited in our minds by the want of them in others. That this rule of judgment is at least *not infallible*, may be inferred from the common observation, (justified by the experience of every man who has paid any attention to human life,) that the most scrupulous men in their own conduct are generally the most indulgent to the faults of their fellow-creatures. I will not go quite so far as to assert with Dr. Hutcheson, (although I be-

merit, by the hints it suggests for curing the weaknesses in which the character originates, and by the interesting contrast it exhibits between the *Misanthrope* of Moliere and a man who unites inflexibility of principle with that accommodation of temper which is necessary for the practical exercise of virtue.

lieve this remark has much foundation in truth,) "that men have commonly the good or the bad qualities which they ascribe to mankind." I shall content myself with repeating after Mr. Addison, "that, among all the monstrous characters in human nature, there is none so odious, nor indeed so exquisitely ridiculous, as that of a rigid severe temper in a worthless man;"[1] an observation which, from the manner in which he states it, evidently shows that he did not consider this union as a very *rare* occurrence among the numberless inconsistencies in our moral judgments and habits.

But what we are chiefly concerned at present to remark, is the tendency of a censorious disposition with respect to our own *happiness*. That favourable opinions of our species, and those benevolent affections towards them which such opinions produce, are sources of exquisite enjoyment to those who entertain them, no person will dispute. But there are two very different ways in which men set about the attainment of this satisfaction. One set of men aim at modelling the world to their own wish, and repine in proportion to the disappointments they experience in their plans of general reformation. Another, while they do what they can to improve their fellow-creatures, consider it as *their* chief business to watch over their own characters; and as they cannot succeed to their wish in making mankind what they ought to be, they study to accommodate their views and feelings to the order of Providence. They exert their ingenuity in apologizing for folly and misconduct, and are always more disposed to praise than to blame: And when they see unquestionable and unpardonable delinquencies, they avail themselves of such occurrences, not as occasions for venting indignation and abuse, but as lessons of admonition to themselves, and as calls to attempt the amendment of the delinquent by gentle and friendly remonstrances. Of these two plans it is easy to see that the one, while it appears flattering to the indolence of the individual, (because it requires no efforts of self-denial,) must necessarily engage him in impracticable and hopeless efforts. The other, although it requires force of

[1] *Spectator*, No. 169.

mind to put it in execution, is within the reach of every man to accomplish in a degree highly important to his own character, and to his own comfort. This indeed I apprehend is the *great secret* of happiness,—to study to accommodate our own minds to things external, rather than to accommodate things external to ourselves; and there are no instances in which the practice of the rule is of more consequence than in our intercourse with our fellow-creatures. Let us do what we can to amend them, but let us trust for our *happiness* to what depends on ourselves. Nor is there any delusion necessary for this purpose; for the fairest views of human character are in truth the justest; and the more intimately we know mankind, the less we shall be misled by the partialities of pride and self-love; and the more shall we be disposed to acknowledge the merits, and to pardon the frailties of others.

"The regulating our apprehensions of the actions of others," says Dr. Hutcheson, "is of very great importance, that we may not imagine mankind worse than they really are, and thereby bring on ourselves a temper full of suspicion, hatred, anger, and contempt towards others, which is a constant state of misery, much worse than all the evils to be feared from credulity. If we examine the true springs of human actions, we shall seldom find their motives worse than self-love. Men are often subject to anger, and on sudden provocations do injuries to each other, and *that* only from self-love, without malice; but the greatest part of their lives is employed in offices of natural affection, friendship, innocent self-love, or love of a country. The little party prejudices are generally founded upon ignorance or false opinions, rather apt to move pity than hatred. Such considerations are the best preservative against anger, malice, and discontent of mind with the order of nature."[1]

These observations suggest the most important of all expedients for correcting those infirmities in which a bad temper originates;—to cultivate that candour with respect to the motives of others, which results from habits of attention to our

[1] *Essay on the Nature and Conduct of the Passions and Affections*, Sect. iv. 4, [p. 109, third edition.]

own infirmities, and from habits of reflection in our cooler moments on the numerous circumstances which, independently of any criminal intention, may produce the *appearance* of vice in human conduct.[1]

Abstracting, however, from these considerations, founded on candid and indulgent views towards our fellow-creatures, it is

[1] Another expedient of very powerful effect is to suppress, as far as possible, the external signs of peevishness or of violence. So intimate is the connexion between mind and body, that the mere imitation of any strong expression has a tendency to excite the corresponding passion; and, on the other hand, the suppression of the external sign has a tendency to compose the passion which it indicates. It is said of Socrates, that, whenever he felt the passion of resentment rising in his mind, he became instantly silent; and I have no doubt, that, by observing this rule, he not only avoided many an occasion of giving offence to others, but added much to the comfort of his own life, by killing the seeds of those malignant affections which are the great bane of human happiness.

Something of the same kind, though proceeding from a less worthy motive, we may see daily exemplified in the case of those men who are peevish and unhappy in their own families, while in the company of strangers they are good humoured and cheerful. At home they give vent to all their passions without restraint, and exasperate their original irritability by the reaction of that bodily agitation which it occasions. In promiscuous society the restraints of ceremony render this impossible. They find themselves obliged to conceal studiously whatever emotions of dissatisfaction they may feel, and soon come to experience, in fact, that gentle and accommodating temper of which they have been striving to counterfeit the appearance.—See *Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind*, Vol. III. pp. 217, 218. [*Supra*, *Works*, Vol. IV. pp. 163-165.]

On these principles is founded a practice which, if I am not misinformed, is followed by that respectable body of men called Quakers, in the education of their children;—to accustom them from their earliest infancy to an equable and monotonous softness of voice; and to check every deviation from it, even in those cases where the tranquillity of their minds must unavoidably be disturbed by accidental occurrences. No expedient more effectual could be thought of for cherishing that evenness and serenity of soul, which, while it renders us inoffensive to others, prepares us to receive without alloy whatever innocent gratifications are placed within our reach.—In practising this rule, however, is there not some danger of producing a sullenness of temper? The following observations of Aristotle (though they are in some respects questionable) deserve at least to be well considered. "The resentful and implacable temper retains anger long, because it does not give free vent to it; for to vent anger in vengeance naturally appeases it by substituting pleasure in the stead of pain, but passion restrained gathers strength by compression, and, as it remains hid within the breast, the gentle power of persuasion cannot be applied for its alleviation; it must be digested by the internal vigour of the constitution, which is a work of time."—*Nicomachian Ethics*, Book IV. chap. v.

of essential importance for our happiness, as well as a duty necessarily resulting from our conviction of the sacredness of moral obligation, to cherish in our minds a devoted attachment to truth and to virtue, on account of their own *intrinsic excellence;* and to cherish it with a peculiar care, if our lot should be cast in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation. No error can be more fatal (as Dr. Ferguson has excellently remarked) than "to rest our own choice of good qualities on the supposition, that we are to meet with such qualities in other men, or to apprehend that want of merit in our fellow-creatures will dispense with that justice or liberality of conduct which we ought to maintain."[1]

Reflections of this sort are, in a peculiar degree, consolatory and useful in such times as we have lately witnessed, when the occasional successes of violence and injustice were apt to shake the confidence of the firmest and most upright characters, and, by suggesting melancholy apprehensions concerning the fortunes of the human race, to damp the benevolent exertions of its warmest and most enlightened friends. "The contemporaries of a great political revolution," says a profound and eloquent writer, "lose frequently all interest in the search of truth, and in the dissemination of right principles. So many events decided by force; so many crimes absolved by success; so many misfortunes insulted by power; so many generous sentiments rendered objects of ridicule;—all conspire to wear out the hopes even of those men who are the most faithful to the cause of justice and humanity. Nevertheless, they ought to take courage from the reflection, that, in the history of the human mind, there has never existed one useful thought, nor one important truth, which has not found its age and its admirers."[2]

The influence of the temper on happiness is much increased by another circumstance; that the same causes which alienate our affections from our fellow-creatures, are apt to suggest unfavourable views of the course of human affairs, and lead the

[1] *Institutes*, [Part IV. chap. iii. sect. 4, p. 154, second edit.;] p. 169, third edit.

[2] *De la Littérature Considérée dans ses rapports avec les institutions Sociales;* par Mad. de Staël Holstein.—Introduction, p. 4.

mind by an easy transition to gloomy conceptions of the general order of the universe. In this state of mind, when, in the language of Hamlet, "*Man delights us not,*"—the sentiment of misanthropy seldom fails to be accompanied with that dark and hopeless philosophy which Shakespeare has, with such exquisite knowledge of the human heart, described as springing up with it from the same root. "This goodly frame, the earth, appears a sterile promontory;—this majestical roof, fretted with golden fires, a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours;—and Man himself—noble in reason, infinite in faculties—this beauty of the world—this paragon of animals, seems but the *quintessence of dust.*" Such a temper and such views are not only to the possessor the completion of wretchedness, but, by the proofs they exhibit of insensibility and ingratitude towards the Great Source of happiness and perfection, they argue some defect in those *moral feelings* to which many men lay claim, who affect an indifference to all serious impressions and sentiments. They argue at least, what Milton has finely called a *sullenness against nature,*—a disposition of mind which no man could possibly feel whose temper was rightly constituted towards his fellow-creatures. How congenial to the best emotions of the heart, is the following sentiment in his *Tractate on Education!* "In those vernal seasons of the year, when the air is soft and pleasant, it were an injury and sullenness against Nature not to go out and see her riches, and partake in her rejoicings with Heaven and earth."

The true foundation of *the vernal delight* which is here so beautifully described,—of this *sympathy,* if I may be allowed the expression, with rejoicing Nature, is a benevolent heart to mankind; a disposition to rejoice with our Maker in the general happiness of his whole creation. To this disposition, when displayed in the lesser offices of ordinary life, we commonly give the name of *good humour;* an expression which, though we sometimes connect with it the idea of levity, yet, when it denotes an habitual state of mind, originating in candour, indulgence, and benevolence, is descriptive of that precise frame which best prepares us to speculate with success on the gravest

and most important of all subjects. "Good humour," says Lord Shaftesbury, "is not only the best security against enthusiasm, but the best foundation of piety and true religion: for if right thoughts and worthy apprehensions of the Supreme Being are fundamental to all true worship and adoration, 'tis more than probable that we shall never miscarry in this respect, except through ill-humour only. Nothing beside ill-humour can bring a man to think seriously, that the world is governed by any devilish or malicious power. I very much question whether any thing, besides ill-humour, can be the cause of atheism. For there are so many arguments to persuade a man in good-humour, that, in the main, all things are kindly and well-disposed, that one would think it impossible for him to be so far out of conceit with affairs, as to imagine they all ran at adventures; and that the world, as wise and venerable a face as it carried, had neither sense nor meaning in it. This, however, I am persuaded of, that nothing beside ill-humour can give us dreadful or ill thoughts of a Supreme Manager. Nothing can persuade us of sullenness or sourness in such a Being, beside the actual fore-feeling of somewhat of this kind within ourselves."*

As the temper has an influence on our speculative opinions, so the views we form of the administration of the Universe, and, in particular, of the condition and prospects of Man, have a reciprocal effect on the temper. The belief of overruling wisdom and goodness communicates the most heartfelt of all satisfactions; and the idea of prevailing order and happiness has an habitual effect in composing the discordant affections, similar to what we experience when, in some retired and tranquil scene, we enjoy the sweet serenity of a summer evening.

This tendency of the mind, on the one hand, to *harmonize* its affections, and, on the other, to suffer the passions to run into *anarchy*, according as it thinks well or ill of the order of the universe; or, (which comes to the same thing,) this influence of an enlightened religion on the temper, is alluded to

* [*Characteristics;—Letter concerning Enthusiasm*, sect. iii. Vol. I. p. 22, ed. 1711.]

more than once in that beautiful poem the *Pleasures of Imagination*. In the following passage of one of his odes, Akenside has employed, in confirmation of this doctrine, the same illustration to which I have just alluded; I mean the effect which particular aspects of the *material* universe have on the *moral* and social feelings.

"Thron'd in the sun's descending car,
What power unseen diffuseth far
This tenderness of mind!
What Genius smiles on yonder flood;
What God in whispers from the wood,
Bids every thought be kind!

"O Thou, whate'er thine awful name,
Whose goodness our untoward frame
With social love constrains;
Thou, who by fair affection's ties
Giv'st us to double all our joys
And half disarm our pains;

"Let universal candour still,
Clear as yon heaven-reflecting rill,
Preserve my open mind;
Nor this, nor that man's crooked ways
One sordid doubt within me raise,
To injure human kind." *

[SUBSECT.] II.—*Influence of the Imagination on Happiness.*

One of the principal effects of a liberal education, is to accustom us to withdraw our attention from the objects of our present perceptions, and to dwell at pleasure on the past, the absent, and the future. How much it must enlarge in this way the sphere of our enjoyment or suffering is obvious; for (not to mention the recollection of the past) all that part of our happiness or misery, which arises from our *hopes* or our *fears*, derives its existence entirely from the power of imagination.

It is not, however, from education alone that the differences among individuals in respect of this faculty seem to arise. Even among those who have enjoyed the same advantages of mental culture, we find some men in whom it never makes any

* [*Ode* V. Against Suspicion.]

considerable appearance,—men whose thoughts seem to be completely engrossed with the objects and events with which their senses are conversant, and on whose minds the impressions produced by what is absent and future are so comparatively languid, that they seldom or never excite their passions or arrest their attention. In others, again, the colouring which imagination throws on the objects they conceive is so brilliant, that even the present impressions of sense are unable to stand the comparison; and the thoughts are perpetually wandering from this world of realities to fairy scenes of their own creation. In such men, the imagination is the principal source of their pleasurable or painful sensations, and their happiness or misery is in a great measure determined by the gay or melancholy cast, which this faculty has derived from original constitution, or from acquired habits.

When the *hopes* or the *fears* which imagination inspires prevail over the present importunity of our sensual appetites, it is a proof of the superiority which the intellectual part of our character has acquired over the animal; and as the course of life which wisdom and virtue prescribe requires frequently a sacrifice of the *present* to the *future*, a warm and vigorous imagination is sometimes of essential use, by exhibiting those lively prospects of solid and permanent happiness which may counteract the allurements of present pleasure. In those who are enslaved completely by their sensual appetites, imagination may indeed operate in anticipating future gratification, or it may blend itself with memory in the recollection of past enjoyment; but where this is the case, imagination is so far from answering its intended purpose, that it establishes an unnatural alliance between our intellectual powers and our animal desires; and extends the empire of the latter, by filling up the intervals of actual indulgence with habits of thought, more degrading and ruinous, if possible, to the rational part of our being, than the time which is employed in criminal gratification.

In such individuals, imagination is but a prolongation of sensual indulgences, and scarcely merits the appellation of an intellectual power. It brutifies the man, indeed, still more than

he could possibly become, if it did not form a part of his constitution, and if he were merely a compound of reason and passion. To such men, it surely cannot be considered as a constituent of what deserves the name of happiness. On the contrary, by increasing the importunate cravings of desire beyond those limits which nature prescribes, it abridges that sphere of innocent gratification which the Beneficent Author of our Being intends us to enjoy.

In mentioning, however, the influence of imagination on happiness, what I had chiefly in view was the addition which is made to our enjoyments or sufferings, on the whole, by the predominance of *hope* or of *fear* in the habitual state of our minds. One man is continually led, by the complexion of his temper, to forebode evil to himself and to the world; while another, after a thousand disappointments, looks forward to the future with exultation, and feels his confidence in Providence unshaken. One principal cause of such differences is undoubtedly the natural constitution of the mind in point of fortitude. The weak and the timid are under continual alarm from the apprehension of evils which are barely possible, and fancy "there is a lion in the way," when they are called on to discharge the common duties of life; although, in truth, (as one of our poets has remarked,) the evils they apprehend, supposing them actually to happen, cannot exceed those they habitually suffer.

> "Is there an evil worse than fear itself?
> And what avails it that indulgent Heaven
> From mortal eyes has wrapt the woes to come,
> If we, ingenious to torment ourselves,
> Grow pale at hideous fictions of our own?
> Enjoy the present; nor with heedless cares
> Of what *may* spring from blind misfortune's womb,
> Appal the surest hour that life bestows:
> Serene and master of yourself prepare
> For what may come, and leave the rest to Heaven."[1]

It may be worth while here to remark, that what we properly call *cowardice* is entirely a disease of the imagination.

[1] Armstrong's *Art of Preserving Health*, Book iv. [123.]

It does not always imply an impatience under present suffering. On the contrary, it is frequently observed in men who submit quietly to the evils which they have actually experienced, and of which they have thus learned to measure the extent with accuracy. Nay, there are cases in which *patience* is the offspring of *cowardice*, the imagination magnifying future dangers to such a degree as to render present sufferings comparatively insignificant.[1] Men of this description always judge it safer to "bear the ills they know, than fly to others that they know not of;" and of consequence, when under the pressure of pain and disease, scruple to employ those vigorous remedies, which, while they give them a chance for recovery, threaten them with the possibility of a more imminent danger. The brave, on the contrary, are not always patient under distress; and they sometimes, perhaps, owe their bravery in part to this impatience. We may remark an apt illustration of this observation in the two sexes. The male is more courageous, but more impatient of suffering; the female more timid, but more resigned and serene under severe pain and affliction.

Abstracting from constitutional biases, the two great sources of a desponding imagination are *superstition* and *scepticism*. Of the former, the unhappy victims are many, and have been so in all ages of the world, although their number may be expected gradually to diminish in proportion to the progress and the diffusion of knowledge. All of us, however, have had an opportunity of witnessing enough of its effects in those remains which are still to be found, in many parts of this country, of the old prejudices with respect to apparitions and spectres, to be able to form an idea of what mankind must have suffered in the ages of Gothic ignorance, when these weaknesses of the uninformed mind were skilfully made use of by an ambitious priesthood as an engine of ecclesiastical policy. *Scepticism*, too, when carried to an extreme, can scarcely fail to produce similar effects. As it encourages the notion, that all events are regulated by chance, if it does not alarm the mind with terror, it extinguishes at least every ray of hope; and such is the rest-

[1] Dolendi modus, timendi non item.

less activity of the mind, that it may be questioned whether the agitation of fear be a source of more complete wretchedness than that listlessness which deprives us of all interest about futurity, and represents to us the present moment alone as ours. Nor is this all. A complete scepticism is so unnatural a state to the human understanding, that it was probably never realized in any one instance. Nay, I believe it will generally be found, that, in proportion to the violence of a man's disbelief on those important subjects which are essential to human happiness, the more extravagant is his credulity on other articles, where the fashion of the times does not brand credulity as a weakness; for the mind must have something distinct from the objects of sense on which to repose itself; and those principles of our nature, on which religion is founded, if they are prevented from developing themselves under the direction of an enlightened reason, will infallibly disclose themselves, in one way or another, in the character and the conduct.

Of this no stronger proof can be produced, than that the same period of the eighteenth century, and the same part of Europe, which were most distinguished by the triumphs of a sceptical philosophy, were also distinguished by a credulity so extraordinary, or rather so miraculous, as to encourage a greater number of visionaries and impostors than had appeared since the time of the revival of letters. The pretenders to Animal Magnetism, and the revivers of the Rosicrucian Mysteries, are but two instances out of many that might be mentioned.

I have only to add farther on this subject, that it is an enlightened philosophy alone which can guard the mind effectually against those superstitious weaknesses which are often to be found in men remarkable, not only for their intrepidity amid the real difficulties and dangers of life, but for their fearless and heroic gallantry in the field of battle. Not to speak of Scipio's faith in dreams, and Cæsar's apprehension about the Ides of March, some of the greatest military characters in modern Europe have, even in our own times, allowed themselves to be imposed on by the artifices of astrologers, nay, of

common fortune-tellers. Frederic the Great (if we may credit the Marquis de Bouillé) was not without faith in the predictions of conjurers; and the late Gustavus of Sweden (we are positively assured by the same writer) was by no means free from this sort of superstition. He had always dreaded the month of March; and the first word he said to Armfeldt, on finding himself wounded, was to remind him of this circumstance.[1] The ascendant gained by Rosicrucian Illuminati over the mind of the late Frederic William of Prussia, (a prince of unquestionable intrepidity in all military operations,) is matter of general notoriety.

Such, then, are the miseries of an ill-regulated imagination, whether arising from constitutional biases, or from the acquisition of erroneous opinions; and they are miseries which, when they affect habitually the state of the mind, are sufficient to poison all the enjoyments which fortune can offer. To those, on the contrary, whose education has been fortunately conducted, this faculty opens inexhaustible sources of delight, presenting continually to their thoughts the fairest views of mankind and of Providence, and, under the deepest gloom of adverse fortune, gilding the prospects of futurity.

I have remarked, in the first volume of the *Philosophy of the Human Mind*, [p. 452, *seq.*] that what we call *sensibility*, depends in a great measure on the degree of imagination we possess; and hence, in such a world as ours, chequered as it is with good and evil, there must be in every mind a mixture of pleasure and of pain, proportioned to the interest which imagination leads it to take in the fortunes of mankind. It is even natural and reasonable for a benevolent disposition (notwithstanding what Mr. Smith has so ingeniously alleged to the contrary[2]) to dwell more habitually on the gloomy than on the gay aspect of human affairs; for the fortunate stand in no need of our assistance; while, amidst the distractions of our own personal concerns, the wretched require all the assistance which our imagination can lend them, to engage our attention to their

[1] *Memoirs of the Marquis de Bouillé.*

[2] *Theory of Moral Sentiments.* Sixth edition. Part III. chap. 3.

distresses. In this sympathy, however, with the general sufferings of humanity, the pleasure far overbalances the pain; not only on account of that secret charm which accompanies all the modifications of benevolence, but because it is they alone whose prospects of futurity are sanguine, and whose confidence in the final triumph of reason and of justice is linked with all the best principles of the heart, who are likely to make a common cause with the oppressed and the miserable. This, therefore, (although we frequently apply to it the epithet *melancholy*,) is, on the whole, a happy state of mind, and has no connexion with what we commonly call *low spirits*,—a disease where the pain is unmixed, and which is always accompanied, either as a cause or effect, by the most intolerable of all feelings, a sentiment of self-dissatisfaction; whereas the temper I have now alluded to is felt only by those who are at peace with themselves, and with the whole world. Such is that species of *melancholy* which Thomson has so pathetically described as exerting a peculiar influence at that season of the year, (his own favourite and inspiring season,) when the "dark winds of autumn return," and when the falling leaves and the naked fields fill the heart at once with mournful presages and with tender recollections.

"He comes! he comes! in every breeze the *Power*
Of *philosophic melancholy* comes!
His near approach, the sudden starting tear,
The glowing cheek, the mild dejected air,
The softened feature, and the beating heart,
Pierc'd deep with many a virtuous pang, declare.
O'er all the soul his sacred influence breathes;
Inflames imagination; through the breast
Infuses every tenderness; and far
Beyond dim earth exalts the swelling thought.
Ten thousand thousand fleet ideas, such
As never mingled with the vulgar dream,
Crowd fast into the mind's creative eye.
As fast the correspondent passions rise,
As varied and as high: Devotion rais'd
To rapture and Divine astonishment;
The love of nature unconfined, and chief
Of human race; the large ambitious wish
To make them blest; the sigh for suffering worth

> Lost in obscurity; the noble scorn
> Of tyrant pride; the fearless great resolve;
> The wonder which the dying patriot draws
> Inspiring glory through remotest time;
> The awakened throb for virtue and for fame;
> The sympathies of love, and friendship dear;
> With all the social offspring of the heart." *

It will not, I think, be denied, that an imagination of the cast here described, while it has an obvious tendency to refine the taste and to exalt the character, enlarges very widely in the man who possesses it the sphere of his enjoyment. It is, however, no less indisputable, that this faculty requires an uncommon share of good sense to keep it under proper regulation, and to derive from it the pleasures it was intended to afford, without suffering it either to mislead the judgment in the conduct of life, or to impair our relish for the moderate gratifications which are provided for our present condition. I have treated at some length of this subject in the first volume of the *Philosophy of the Human Mind*, under the title of the "*Inconveniences resulting from an ill-regulated Imagination;*"† and shall content myself here with a simple reference to that chapter, without attempting any recapitulation of its contents.

These inconveniences have appeared to some philosophers to be so alarming, that they have concluded it to be one of the most essential objects of education to repress as much as possible this dangerous faculty. But in this, as in other instances, it is in vain to counteract the purposes of nature; and all that human wisdom ought to attempt, is to study the ends which she has apparently in view, and to co-operate with the means which she has provided for their attainment. The very arguments on which these philosophers have proceeded justifies the remark I have now made, and encourages us to follow out the plan I have recommended; for surely the more cruel the effects of a deranged imagination, the happier are the consequences to be expected from this part of our constitution if properly re-

* [*Seasons;* Autumn, 1003.]

† [Chap. VII. sect. v.; *supra*, *Works*, Vol. II. p. 457, *seq.*]

gulated, and if directed to its destined purposes by good sense and philosophy. It is justly remarked by an author in the *Tatler*, as an acknowledged fact, that "of all writings licentious poems do soonest corrupt the heart. And why," continues he, "should we not be as universally persuaded that the grave and serious performances of such as write in the most engaging manner, by a kind of Divine impulse, must be the most effectual persuasive to goodness? The most active principle in our mind is the imagination. To it a good poet makes his court perpetually, and by this faculty takes care to gain it first. Our passions and inclinations come over next, and our reason surrenders itself with pleasure in the end. Thus the whole soul is insensibly betrayed into morality, by bribing the fancy with beautiful and agreeable images of those very things that, in the books of the philosophers, appear austere, and have at the best but a kind of forbidding aspect. In a word, the poets do, as it were, strew the rough paths of virtue so full of flowers, that we are not sensible of the uneasiness of them, and imagine ourselves in the midst of pleasures, and the most bewitching allurements, at the time we are making a progress in the severest duties of life."[1]

Hitherto we have been considering the connexion between imagination and happiness in those individuals over whose minds the influence of this faculty is increased by a liberal education beyond the ordinary standard. There is, however, no mind over which it has not some influence more or less; for there is no mind whose estimates of external objects are not affected in some degree by casual *associations*, and of course none in which the conceptions of external objects are not in some degree modified by the power of imagination.

I have elsewhere remarked that the greater part of what Mr. Alison has so finely observed concerning the pleasures of *Taste*, may be applied to the various objects of our pursuit in life. Hardly anything is appreciated according to its intrinsic value. Long before the dawn of reason and reflection, associations are formed in the minds of children, of happiness, of elegance, of

[1] No. 98.

gaiety, of spirit, of fashion, of sensibility, as connected with particular pursuits or amusements, sometimes with particular animal gratifications. And it is a melancholy truth to add, that by such casual associations the choice of most individuals is determined, and the destiny of their lives decided.

Such associations, however, are not always a source of suffering. On the contrary, they often add much to the happiness of human life. With what satisfaction does the soldier submit to the hardships of his profession, who superadds to a sense of duty the enthusiasm which arises from the classical recollections of Greece and Rome, in comparison of *him* whose mind never wanders from the scenes and occupations which press upon his senses! Even the most trifling occurrences of the most common situation;—the insignificant objects which are scattered over the waste of human life, are embellished to those whose minds are stored with fortunate associations, with charms which are as inconceivable to the bulk of mankind as the raptures with which the poet surveys the face of Nature are to the tradesman and the peasant. This does not render the pleasures of life less *real*. On the contrary, it adds infinitely to their amount, and furnishes one of the strongest evidences of benevolent design in the Author of our Constitution.

The great object of education ought to be, not to counteract this tendency to association, but to give it a proper direction,—not to limit our enjoyment in every particular to the mere physical gratification, but to connect pleasing associations as far as possible with objects and events which it is in the power of all men to command—with the faithful and conscientious discharge of our duties, with the pursuits of science, and with those beauties of nature which are open to all.

"Associations of this kind," as Mr. Alison well remarks, "when acquired in early life, are seldom altogether lost; and whatever inconveniences they may sometimes have with respect to the general character, or however much they may be ridiculed by those who do not experience them, they are yet productive to those who possess them of a perpetual and innocent delight. Nature herself is their friend. In her most

dreadful as well as her most lovely scenes, they can discover something either to elevate their imaginations, or to move their hearts, and amid every change of scenery or of climate, can still find themselves among the early objects of their admiration or their love."*

On the proper regulation of this part of our constitution, many valuable remarks are to be found in the writings of the ancient Stoics; among whom, the *χρῆσις οἷα δεῖ φαντασιῶν* was regarded as one of the most important of our concerns in the conduct of life.†

Even in those men, however, whose education has not been so systematically conducted, and whose associations have been formed by accident, notwithstanding the many acute sufferings to which they may be exposed, I am persuaded, that (except in some very rare combinations of circumstances) this part of our constitution is a more copious source of pleasure than of pain. After all the complaints that have been made of the peculiar distresses incident to cultivated minds, who would exchange the sensibility of his intellectual and moral being for the apathy of those whose only avenues of pleasure and pain are to be found in their animal nature, who "move thoughtlessly in the narrow circle of their existence, and to whom the falling leaves present no idea but that of approaching winter?" The happiness of such men, it is true, must depend in a great measure on accident; but (such is the wise and gracious arrangement of things) that I am persuaded they are happier, on the whole, than those in whom the lessons of a cold and sceptical philosophy extinguish the glow of hope and fancy, and "freeze the genial current of the soul." I would only except those unfortunate cases where the mind is disordered by a constitutional melancholy, or has been early tinctured with the gloom of a depressing superstition.

I shall conclude these very imperfect hints on a most im-

* [*Essays on the Nature and Principles of Taste*, Essay I. chap. i. sect. 3.—Vol. I. p. 67, sixth edition. 1825.]

† [Vide Epicteti *Enchir.*, cap. vi.; Arriani *Dissert. Epict.* Lib. I. cap. xii., *et passim*; Antoninum, *De Rebus Suis*, Lib. V. § xvi.]

portant subject, with remarking the inefficacy of mere reasoning or argument, in correcting the effects of early impressions and prejudices. More is to be expected from the opposite associations, which may be gradually formed by a new course of studies and of occupations, or by a complete change of scenes, of habits, and of society.

[SUBSECT.] III.—*Influence of Opinions on Happiness.*

By opinions are here meant, not merely speculative conclusions to which we have given our assent, but convictions which have taken root in the mind, and have an habitual influence on the conduct.

Of these opinions a very great and important part are, in the case of all mankind, interwoven by education with their first habits of thinking, or are insensibly imbibed from the manners of the times.

Where such opinions are erroneous, they may often be corrected to a great degree by the persevering efforts of a reflecting and vigorous mind; but as the number of minds capable of reflection is comparatively small, it becomes a duty on all who have themselves experienced the happy effects of juster and more elevated principles, to impart, as far as they are able, the same blessing to others. The subject is of too great extent to be here prosecuted; but the reader will find it discussed at great length in a very valuable section of Dr. Ferguson's *Principles of Moral and Political Science.*[1]

Of the doctrines contained in this section, the following abstract is given by the same writer in his *Institutes of Moral Philosophy.*

"It is unhappy to lay the pretensions of human nature so low as to check its exertions. The despair of virtue is still more unhappy than the despair of knowledge.

"It is unhappy to entertain notions of what men actually are, so high as, upon trial and disappointment, to run into the opposite extreme of distrust.

"It is unhappy to rest our own choice of good qualities on

[1] Part II. chap. i. sect. 8.

the supposition, that we are to meet with such qualities in other men; or to apprehend, that want of merit in other men will dispense with that justice or liberality of conduct which we ought to maintain.

"It is unhappy to consider perfection as the standard by which we are to censure others, not as the rule by which we are to conduct ourselves.

"It is a wretched opinion, that happiness consists in a freedom from trouble, or in having nothing to do.

"In consequence of this opinion men complain of what might employ them agreeably. By declining every duty, and every active engagement, they render life a burden, and they complain that it is so. By declining business to go in search of amusement, they reject what is fitted to occupy them, and search in vain for something else to quicken the languor of a vacant mind.

"It is therefore unhappy to entertain an opinion, that any thing can amuse us better than the duties of our station, or than that which we are in the present moment called upon to do.

"It is an unhappy opinion, that beneficence is an effort of self-denial, or that we lay our fellow-creatures under great obligations by the kindness we do them.

"It is an unhappy opinion, that anything whatever is preferable to happiness.[1]

* * * * * * *

"It is happy," continues the same author, "to value per-

[1] In illustration of this last remark, Dr. Ferguson quotes in a note the following passage from the *Tatler*:— "There is hardly a man to be found who would not rather be in pain to appear happy, than be really happy to appear miserable."

The author of the *Fable of the Bees* (see remark *M*) has also said, "there is nothing so ravishing to the proud," he should have said to the *vain*, "as to be thought happy."

Does not this general anxiety to assume the appearance of happiness proceed from the universal conviction of the connexion between happiness and virtue? By counterfeiting the outward signs of happiness, a vain man, without any offensive violation of modesty, lays claim indirectly to all those moral qualities of which happiness is commonly understood to be the fruit and the reward.

sonal qualities above every other consideration, and to state perfection as a guide to ourselves, not as a rule by which to censure others.

"It is happy to rely on what is in our own power; to value the characters of a worthy, benevolent, and strenuous mind, not as a form merely to be observed in our conduct, but as the completion of what we have to wish for in human life, and to consider the debasements of a malicious and cowardly nature as the extreme misery to which we are exposed.

"It is happy to have continually in view that we are members of society, and of the community of mankind; that we are instruments in the hand of God for the good of his creatures; that, if we are ill members of society, or unwilling instruments in the hand of God, we do our utmost to counteract our nature, to quit our station, and to undo ourselves.

"*I am in the station which God has assigned me*, says Epictetus. With this reflection a man may be happy in every station; without it he cannot be happy in any. Is not the appointment of God sufficient to outweigh every other consideration? This rendered the condition of a slave agreeable to Epictetus, and that of a monarch to Antoninus. This consideration renders any situation agreeable to a rational nature, which delights not in partial interests, but in universal good."[1]

This excellent passage contains a summary of the most valuable principles of the Stoical school. *One* of their doctrines, however, I could have wished that Dr. Ferguson had touched upon with his masterly hand; I mean that which relates to the *inconsistencies* which most men fall into in their expectations of happiness, as well as in the estimates they form of the prosperity of others. The following quotation from Epictetus* will explain sufficiently the doctrine to which I allude.

"What is more reasonable than that they who take pains for anything should get most in that particular for which they take pains? They have taken pains for power, you for right

[1] [Part IV. chap. iii. §§ 4, 5, 2d edit., p. 154, *seq.*] p. 168, *et seq.* 3d edit.

* [Arriani *Dissert. Epict.* Lib. IV. cap. vi.]

principles; they for riches, you for a proper use of the appearances of things. See whether they have the advantage of you in that for which you have taken pains, and which they neglect. . . . If they are in power and you not, why will you not speak the truth to yourself, that you do nothing for the sake of power, but that they do everything? . . . No, but since I take care to have right principles, it is more reasonable that I should have power? Yes, in respect to what you take care about, your principles. But give up to others the things in which they have taken more care than you. Else it is just as if, because you have right principles, you should think it fit that when you shoot an arrow you should hit the mark better than an archer, or that you should forge better than a smith."[1]

Upon the foregoing passage a very ingenious and elegant writer, Mrs. Barbauld, has written a commentary so full of good sense and of important practical morality, that I am sure I run no hazard of trespassing on the patience of the reader by the length of the following extracts.

"As most of the unhappiness in the world arises rather from disappointed desires, than from positive evil, it is of the utmost consequence to attain just notions of the laws and order of the universe, that we may not vex ourselves with fruitless wishes, or give way to groundless and unreasonable discontent. . . . . We should consider this world as a great mart of commerce, where fortune exposes to our view various commodities, riches, ease, tranquillity, fame, integrity, knowledge. Every thing is marked at a settled price. Our time, our labour, our ingenuity, is so much ready money, which we are to lay out to the best advantage. Examine, compare, choose, reject; but stand to your own judgment, and do not, like children, when you have purchased one thing, repine that you do not possess another which you did not purchase. Such is the force of well-regulated industry, that a steady and vigorous exertion of our faculties, directed to one end, will generally insure success. Would you, for instance, be rich? Do you think that single point worth the sacrificing every thing else to? You may then

[1] Mrs. Carter's *Translation*.

be rich. Thousands have become so from the lowest beginnings, from toil and patient diligence, and attention to the minutest articles of expense and profit. But you must give up the pleasures of leisure, of a vacant mind, of a free unsuspicious temper. If you preserve your integrity, it must be a coarse-spun and vulgar honesty. Those high and lofty notions of morals which you brought with you from the schools must be considerably lowered, and mixed with the baser alloy of a jealous and worldly-minded prudence. You must learn to do hard, if not unjust things; and for the nice embarrassments of a delicate and ingenuous spirit, it is necessary for you to get rid of them as fast as possible. You must shut your heart against the muses, and be content to feed your understanding with plain household truths. In short, you must not attempt to enlarge your ideas, or polish your taste, or refine your sentiments, but must keep on in one beaten track, without turning aside either to the right hand or to the left 'But I cannot submit to drudgery like this. I feel a spirit above it.' 'Tis well: be above it then; only do not repine that you are not rich.

"Is knowledge the pearl of price? That too may be purchased—by steady application, and long solitary hours of study and reflection. Bestow these and you shall be wise. 'But,' says the man of letters, 'what a hardship is it that many who are grossly illiterate shall raise a fortune and make a figure, while I have little more than the common conveniences of life.' *Et tibi magna satis!* Was it in order to raise a fortune that you consumed the sprightly hours of youth in study and retirement? Was it to be rich that you grew pale over the midnight lamp, and distilled the sweetness from the Greek and Roman spring? You have then mistaken your path, and ill employed your industry. 'What reward have I then for all my labours?' What reward! A large comprehensive soul, well purged from vulgar fears, and perturbations, and prejudices; able to comprehend and interpret the works of man and of God. A rich, flourishing, cultivated mind, pregnant with inexhaustible stores of entertainment and reflection. A per-

petual spring of fresh ideas; and the conscious dignity of superior intelligence. Good heaven! and what reward can you ask besides?

"'But is it not some reproach upon the economy of Providence that such a one, who is a mean, dirty fellow, should have amassed wealth enough to buy half a nation?' Not in the least. He made himself a mean, dirty fellow for that very end. He has paid his health, his conscience, his liberty for it, and will you envy him his bargain? Will you hang your head and blush in his presence because he outshines you in equipage and show? Lift up your brow with a noble confidence, and say to yourself, I have not these things, it is true; but it is because I have not sought,—because I have not desired them,—it is because I possess something better. I have chosen my lot,—I am content and satisfied.

* * * * * * *

"I much admire the spirit of the ancient philosophers, in that they never attempted, as our moralists often do, to lower the tone of philosophy, and make it consistent with all the indulgences of indolence and sensuality. They never thought of having the bulk of mankind for their disciples; but kept themselves as distinct as possible from a worldly life. They plainly told men what sacrifices were required, and what advantages they were which might be expected.

'Si virtus hoc una potest dare, fortis omissis
Hoc age deliciis.' . . . .

"If you would be a philosopher these are the terms. You must do thus and thus: There is no other way. If not, go and be one of the vulgar."

[SUBSECT.] IV.—*Influence of Habits on Happiness.*

The effect of Habit in reconciling our minds to the inconveniences of our situation was formerly remarked, [p. 152, *seq.*] and an argument was drawn from it in proof of the goodness of our Creator, who, besides making so rich a provision of objects suited to the principles of our nature, has thus bestowed on us

a power of accommodation to external circumstances, which these principles teach us to avoid.

This tendency of the mind, however, to adapt itself to the objects with which it is familiarly conversant, may, in some instances, not only be a source of occasional suffering, but may disqualify us for relishing the best enjoyments which human life affords. The habits contracted during infancy and childhood are so much more inveterate than those of our maturer years, that they have been justly said to constitute a second nature; and if, unfortunately, they have been formed amidst circumstances over which we have no control, they leave us no security for our happiness but the caprice of fortune.

To habituate the minds of children to those occupations and enjoyments alone, which it is in the power of an individual at all times to command, is the most solid foundation that can be laid for their future tranquillity. These, too, are the occupations and enjoyments which afford the most genuine and substantial satisfaction; and if education were judiciously employed to second in this respect the recommendations of nature, they might appropriate to themselves all the borrowed charms which the vanities of the world derive from casual associations.

With respect to pursuits which depend, in the first instance, on our own choice, it is of the last importance for us to keep constantly in view how much of the happiness of mankind arises from habit, and in the formation of our plans to disregard those prepossessions and prejudices which so often warp the judgment in the conduct of life. "Choose that course of action," said Pythagoras, "which is best, and custom will soon render it the most agreeable."*

To these very slight hints concerning the regulation of the habits, I shall add a few observations of Dr. Paley's which appear to me to be solid and judicious, and which afford a favourable specimen of that talent for familiar and happy illustration for which this very popular writer has been so justly celebrated.

* [Plutarch, (*De Exilio; Opera*, tom. ii. p. 602, ed. Xylandri.) Ascribed also to Epictetus.]

"The art in which the secret of human happiness in a great measure consists, is to *set* the habits in such a manner that every change may be a change for the better. The habits themselves are much the same; for whatever is made habitual becomes smooth, and easy, and nearly indifferent. The return to an old habit is likewise easy, whatever the habit be. Therefore the advantage is with those habits which allow of indulgence in the deviation from them. The luxurious receive no greater pleasure from their dainties, than the peasant does from his bread and cheese; but the peasant whenever he goes abroad finds *a feast*, whereas the Epicure must be well entertained to escape disgust. Those who spend every day at cards, and those who go every day to plough, pass their time much alike; intent upon what they are about, wanting nothing, regretting nothing, they are both for the time in a state of ease; but then whatever suspends the occupation of the card-player distresses him; whereas to the labourer every interruption is a refreshment: and this appears in the different effect that *Sunday* produces on the two, which proves a day of recreation to the one, but a lamentable burden to the other. The man who has learned to live alone feels his spirits enlivened whenever he enters into company, and takes his leave without regret. Another who has long been accustomed to a crowd, experiences in company no elevation of spirits, nor any greater satisfaction than what the man of a retired life finds in his chimney corner. So far their conditions are equal; but let a change of place, fortune, or situation, separate the companion from his circle, his visitors, his club, common-room, or coffee-house, and the difference of advantage in the choice and constitution of the two habits will show itself. Solitude comes to the one clothed with melancholy; to the other it brings liberty and quiet. You will see the one fretful and restless; at a loss how to dispose of his time till the hour come round that he can forget himself in bed; the other easy and satisfied, taking up his book or his pipe as soon as he finds himself alone; ready to admit any little amusement that casts up, or turn his hands and attention to the first business that presents

itself; or, content without either, to sit still and let his trains of thought glide indolently through his brain, without much use, perhaps, or pleasure, but without *hankering* after anything better, and without irritation. A reader who has inured himself to books of science and argumentation, if a novel, a well written pamphlet, an article of news, a narrative of a curious voyage, or the journal of a traveller comes in his way, sits down to the repast with relish; enjoys his entertainment while it lasts, and can return when it is over to his graver reading without distaste. Another, with whom nothing will go down but works of humour and pleasantry, or whose curiosity must be interested by perpetual novelty, will consume a bookseller's window in half a forenoon, during which time he is rather in search of diversion than diverted; and as books to his taste are few and short, and rapidly read over, the stock is soon exhausted, when he is left without resource from this principal supply of harmless amusement."*

As a supplement to the remarks of Paley, I shall quote a short passage from Montaigne, containing an observation relative to the same subject; which, although stated in a form rather unqualified, seems to me highly worthy of attention. "We must not rivet ourselves so fast to our humours and complexions. Our chief business is to know how to apply ourselves to various customs. For a man to keep himself tied and bound by necessity to *one* only course, is but bare existence, not living. It was an honourable character of the elder Cato, ('huic versatile ingenium sic pariter ad omnia fuit, ut natum ad id unum diceres, quodcunque ageret.') 'So versatile was his genius, that whatever he took in hand, you would be apt to say that he was formed for that very thing only.'[1] Were I to choose for myself, there is no fashion so good that I should care to be so wedded to it as not to have it in my power to disengage myself from it. Life is a motion, uneven, irregular, and ever varying its direction. A man is not his own friend, much less his own master, but rather a slave to himself, who is

* [*Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy*, Book I. chap. vi. § 3.]

[1] Livy, *Hist.* Lib. XXXIX. cap. xl.

eternally pursuing his own humour, and such a bigot to his inclinations, that he is not able to abandon or to alter them."[1]

The only thing to be censured in this passage is, that the author makes no distinction between *good* and *bad* habits; between those which we are induced to cultivate by reason, and by the original principles of our nature; and those which reason admonishes us to shun, on account of the mischievous consequences with which they are likely to be followed. With respect to these two classes of habits considered in contrast with each other, it is extremely worthy of observation, that the former are incomparably more easy in the acquisition than the latter; while the latter, when once acquired, are (probably, in consequence of this very circumstance, the difficulty of overcoming our natural propensities) of at least equal efficacy in subjecting all the powers of the will to their dominion.

That such habits as are reasonable and agreeable to nature are more easily acquired than others of a contrary description, is an old and common remark. It is well expressed, and very happily illustrated in the following passage of Quintilian. "The discipline of a virtuous and happy life is short and easy, nature having formed us for whatever is excellent, and having so facilitated to a willing mind every acquisition which tends to its improvement, as to render it wonderful that vice should be so prevalent in the world. For as to fishes water is the appropriate element; to terrestrial animals the dry land; and to birds the surrounding atmosphere; so to man it is certainly more easy to follow the suggestions of *Nature* than to pursue a plan of life contrary to her obvious intentions and arrangements."[2]

Of the peculiar difficulty of shaking off such inveterate habits, as were at first the most repugnant to our taste and

[1] *Essays*, Book III. chap. iii. Cotton's Translation.

[2] "Brevis est institutio vitæ honestæ beatæque. Natura enim nos ad mentem optimam genuit; adeoque discere meliora volentibus promptum est, ut verè intuenti mirum sit illud magis, malos esse tam multos. Nam ut aqua piscibus, ut sicca terrenis, circumfusus nobis spiritus volucribus convenit, ita certè facilius esse oportebat secundùm naturam, quàm contra eam vivere."—*Instit.* Lib. XII. cap. xi.

inclinations, we have a daily and a melancholy proof in the case of those individuals who have suffered themselves to become slaves to tobacco, to opium, and to other intoxicating drugs, which, so far from possessing the attractions of pleasurable sensations, are in a great degree revolting to an unvitiated palate. The same thing is exemplified in many of those *acquired tastes* which it is the great object of the art of cookery to create and to gratify; and still more remarkably in those fatal habits which sometimes steal on the most amiable characters, under the seducing form of social enjoyment, and of a temporary respite from the evils of life.

I am inclined, however, to think that Montaigne meant to restrict his observations chiefly, if not solely, to habits which are indifferent or nearly indifferent in their *moral* tendency, and that all he is to be understood as asserting amounts to this, that we ought not, in matters connected with the *accommodations* of human life, to enslave ourselves to one set of habits in preference to another. In this sense his doctrine is just and important; and I have only to add to it, that in *this* point of view also virtuous habits possess a distinguished superiority not only over those which are immoral, but over those which are merely innocent or inoffensive, inasmuch as they lead us to associate the idea of happiness with objects which depend infinitely less than any others on the caprice of fortune, or rather with such as every wise and prudent man has it in his power at all times to enjoy. This observation I had occasion to illustrate formerly, when treating of the leading Principles of the Stoical Philosophy, [p. 327, *seq.*]

SECT. IV.—CONTINUATION OF THE SAME SUBJECT.

The foregoing remarks relate to what may be called the essentials of happiness;—the circumstances which constitute the general state or habit of mind that is necessary to lay a ground-work for every other enjoyment.

This foundation being supposed, the sum of happiness en-

joyed by an individual will be proportioned to the degree in which he is able to secure all the various pleasures belonging to our nature.

The most important of these pleasures may be referred to the following heads:—

1. The Pleasures of Activity and of Repose.
2. The Pleasures of Sense.
3. The Pleasures of Imagination.
4. The Pleasures of the Understanding.
5. The Pleasures of the Heart.[1]

An examination and comparison of these different classes of our enjoyments is necessary, even on the Stoical principles, to complete the inquiry concerning happiness, in order to ascertain the relative value of the different objects of choice and rejection.

Such an examination, however, would lead into details inconsistent with the plan, and foreign to the design of this work. To those who choose to prosecute the subject, it opens a field of speculation equally curious and useful, and much less exhausted by moralists than might have been expected from its importance. The following slight hints will be sufficient to justify the classification now mentioned, and may perhaps suggest some useful practical reflections.

[SUBSECT.] I.—*Pleasures of Activity and of Repose.*

I observed before, in treating of our Active Powers, that our occasional propensities to Action and to Repose, are in some respects analogous to our bodily appetites.* They are common, too, like *them*, to man and to the brutes; for every animal we know is prompted by an instinctive impulse, to take that degree of exercise which is conducive to health and vigour, and is prevented from passing the bounds of moderation, by that languor

[1] To make the enumeration more complete, I might have added the Pleasures of Taste; but as these are confined to a comparatively small number of the species, they did not seem to require a particular consideration at present.

* [*Works*, Vol. VI. pp. 5, 129.]

and desire of repose which are consequences of continued exertion.

A fact perfectly similar to this takes place with respect to the mind. We are impelled by nature to the exercise of its different faculties, and we are warned, when we are in danger of overstraining them, by a consciousness of fatigue. In both cases there is a pleasure annexed to the *exercise* of our powers; and this pleasure seems to be an ultimate fact in our constitution, not resolvable into any more simple or general source of enjoyment. If I were disposed to suspect the possibility of any such reference, it would be to the pleasure arising from the consciousness of *power*, of which I treated formerly, when considering our Natural Desires.* But although these pleasures are commonly so blended together, that it is difficult to discriminate them, it might be clearly shown (if it were worth while to enter into the metaphysical discussion) that they have each their distinct origin in our frame. As the view of the subject, however, which I mean to take at present is entirely practical, I do not think it necessary for me to attempt drawing the line between two classes of enjoyment so very nearly allied; and it is for the same reason that I have avoided lengthening the enumeration, by stating the pleasures of *power* as a separate article, the distinction between these and the pleasures of *activity* being too subtle and refined to strike the generality of readers without a commentary.

It is not only with the pleasures of *power* that those of *activity* may be united. They blend also with all the various pleasures of sense, of the imagination, of the understanding, and of the heart; and it is owing to the different effects of these combinations that some kinds of activity are more delightful than others. And as the pleasures of activity are heightened by their union with other gratifications, so a certain mixture of activity is necessary to give a zest to every other enjoyment, or at least to prevent them from ending in languor and satiety. Hence the satisfaction with which we may continue to enjoy the pleasures of the understanding

* [*Works*, Vol. VI. pp. 8-10, 156-160.]

during a length of time, to which it is impossible, by any artifice, to extend the more passive gratifications of the senses or of the imagination,—an important circumstance in our constitution, which I shall afterwards illustrate more fully.

As I made several observations on the pleasures of activity, when attempting to reconcile the physical evils in the condition of man with a beneficent intention in the Author of his being, I shall not enlarge farther on that topic at present. The reasonings that were then stated, were, I flatter myself, sufficient to authorize the general conclusion, that those very circumstances in the order of Providence, on which gloomy moralists have founded their complaints, are impressed with the strongest marks of beneficent wisdom. That, during our progress through life, we are destined never to arrive at the completion of our desires, but to be invited from stage to stage, by one phantom of hope succeeding to another, is obviously a necessary part of that constitution of things which appointed constant activity to be an essential ingredient in human happiness.

Of these pleasures of *activity* which invite man during the period of his vigour to a continued course of exertion, either of body or mind, the pleasures of *repose* may be considered as, in our present state of imperfection, a natural and a necessary consequence. They presuppose a *general* state of activity, without which they can hardly be said to have any existence, and for resuming which they prepare and invigorate the mind, as sleep prepares and disposes us for entering on the duties of our waking hours. In this way they contribute not inconsiderably from the beginning to the close of life to diversify and to increase the sum of our enjoyments; but they constitute in a still more essential manner, as Dr. Paley has remarked, the supreme and the appropriate happiness of *old age*.

"It is not for youth alone," says this pleasing writer, "that the Great Parent of Creation hath provided. Happiness is found in the arm chair of dozing age, as well as in either the sprightliness of the dance, or the animation of the chase. To

novelty, to acuteness of sensation, to hope, to ardour of pursuit, succeeds, what is in no inconsiderable a degree an equivalent for them all,—'*perception of ease.*' Herein is the exact difference between the young and the old. The young are not happy but when enjoying pleasure; the old are happy when free from pain. And this constitution suits with the degrees of animal power which they respectively possess. The vigour of youth was to be stimulated to action by impatience of rest; whilst, to the imbecility of age, quietness and repose become positive gratifications. This same perception of ease oftentimes renders old age a condition of great comfort, especially when riding at its anchor after a busy or tempestuous life. It is well described by Rousseau, to be the interval of repose between the hurry and the end of life."[1]

To this passage from Dr. Paley I shall subjoin an extract from a very different writer, M. Diderot,—an author of unquestionable eloquence and ingenuity, but who unfortunately has not always employed his great talents for the best purposes. The passage which I am to quote is, I think, far from being unexceptionable in point of sound philosophy, inasmuch as it seems to ascribe to a state of *repose*, a positive and appropriate pleasure, independently of any reference to the lassitude produced by a former state of exertion. It is, at the same time, in my opinion, highly exceptionable in point of good taste; and may perhaps be produced without much injustice, as a fair specimen of that false refinement, both in thought and in expression, which was fashionable among other philosophers of the same school.

"He alone has experienced the ineffable charm of a *delicious repose*, whose organs were sensible and delicate; who received from nature a soul that was tender, and a frame that was voluptuous; who enjoyed perfect health; who was in the flower of his years; whose mind was overcast with no cloud, whose heart was agitated by no keen emotion; who, after the fatigue of some gentle exertion, felt, in all the parts of his frame, a pleasure so equally diffused, that he was unconscious

[1] *Natural Theology*, pp. 493, 494. [Chap. xxvi.]

of any local sensation. In that moment of relaxation and enchantment, no memory remained with him of the past, no desire of the future, no anxiety about the present. The flight of time was unperceived; for his happiness flowed from himself, and seemed part of his being. By an imperceptible movement he was tending towards sleep; but during the slow and insensible transition, while all his powers were sinking, he was still enough awake to enjoy the delights of his existence; an enjoyment, however, altogether passive, which excited no attachment to itself,—suggested no matter for reflection,—was accompanied with no sentiment of self-congratulation. If it were possible to form a steady conception of this situation so wholly sensitive, where all the faculties of mind and of body are alive without being in action, and to attach to this *delicious quietism* the idea of immutability, a notion would be formed of the highest and purest happiness that the mind of man is able to imagine."[1]

[1] *Encyclopédie*, Art. *Délicieux*.

I recollect to have heard, somewhat more than forty years ago, at the time when Diderot's reputation was at its highest point in his own country, this passage quoted by some of his Parisian friends and admirers, as one of the richest gems to be found in his writings. That it was considered as such by himself I have no doubt, not only from the scrupulous care with which he has evidently weighed every expression it contains, but from the circumstance of his giving a place in this magnificent work to so unmeaning an article. Nothing but the overweening partiality of an author could have induced Diderot to introduce into a book of science such a comment consisting of mere *verbiage*, upon the import of a word which stood in need of no explanation. I subjoin the original at length as a sort of literary curiosity.

"*Délicieux:* le terme est propre à l'organe du goût; nous disons d'un mets, d'un vin, qu'il est *délicieux*, lorsque le palais en est flatté le plus agréablement qu'il est possible. Le *délicieux* est le plaisir extrême de la sensation du goût. On a généralisé son acception, et l'on a dit d'un séjour qu'il est *délicieux*, lorsque tous les objets qu'on y rencontre reveillent les idées les plus douces, ou excitent les sensations les plus agréables. Le suave extrême est le *délicieux* des odeurs. Le repos a aussi son *délice*. Mais qu'est-ce qu'un *repos délicieux?* Celui-là seul en a connu le charme inexprimable, dont les organes étoient sensibles et délicats; qui avoit reçu de la nature une âme tendre et un tempérament voluptueux; qui jouissoit d'une santé parfaite; qui se trouvoit à la fleur de son âge; qui n'avoit l'esprit troublé d'aucun nuage, l'âme agitée d'aucune émotion trop vive; qui sortoit d'une fatigue douce et légère, et qui éprouvoit dans toutes les parties de son corps un plaisir si également répandu, qu'il ne se faisoit distinguer dans aucune. Il ne lui restoit dans ce moment d'enchantement et de foiblesse, ni mémoire

As these dreams, however, of an Epicurean happiness are but too flattering to the romantic indolence of youthful minds, it may be useful to refer the reader (for the passage is much too long for a quotation) to another picture drawn by a still superior hand; and (what is of still greater consequence) a picture copied faithfully after nature. I allude to the truly eloquent description given by Gibbon of the primitive monks, —a set of men whose notions of the Sovereign Good were certainly very different from those of Diderot, but whose melancholy history affords an instructive lesson to *all* who search for happiness in a total exemption from labour, both of body and mind. In this unnatural state, not even the prospect of lasting bliss beyond the grave was able long to support the alacrity of the spirits, or to ward off those miseries which habits of solitary inaction entail on the imagination. "The vacant hours of the monk," says Gibbon, "heavily rolled along without business or pleasure, and before the close of each day he had repeatedly cursed the tedious progress of the sun."[1] The whole of the passage may be perused with much advantage; and abundantly justifies an assertion of Dr. Ferguson's, that even the complaints of the *sufferer* are not so sure a mark of misery as the stare of the *languid*.[2]

du passé, ni désir de l'avenir, ni inquiétude sur le présent. Le tems avoit cessé de couler pour lui, parce qu'il existoit tout en lui-même; le sentiment de son bonheur ne s'affoiblissoit qu'avec celui de son existence. Il passoit par un mouvement imperceptible, de la veille au sommeil; mais sur ce passage imperceptible, au milieu de la défaillance de toutes ses facultés, il veilloit encore assez, sinon pour penser à quelque chose de distinct, du moins pour sentir toute la douceur de son existence: Mais il en jouissoit d'une jouissance tout-à-fait passive, sans y être attaché, sans y réfléchir, sans s'en réjouir, sans s'en féliciter;—si l'on pouvoit fixer par la pensée cette situation de pur sentiment, où toutes les facultés du corps et de l'âme sont vivantes sans être agissantes, et attacher à ce quiétisme délicieux l'idée d'immutabilité, on se formeroit la notion du bonheur le plus grand et le plus pur que l'homme puisse imaginer."

If the reader is desirous to see a longer and still more elaborate specimen of the same sort of writing by the same hand, he may turn to the article *Jouissance*, in the *Encyclopédie*.

[1] *Decline and Fall*, &c., Vol. VI. p. 262. Edition of 1792.

[2] *Essay on the History of Civil Society*, Part I. sect. vii.

[SUBSECT.] II.—*Pleasures of Sense.*

I mentioned, in the second place, the Pleasures of *Sense;* another class of our enjoyments which is common to man and to the brutes; and which, notwithstanding the space they occupy in the imagination of most men, must be allowed to stand at the very bottom of the scale, whether we regard them in connexion with the nobler principles of our nature, or estimate their value from the accession they bring to the sum of our happiness. When I say this I would not be understood to dispute the real and substantial addition which they make to our happiness, in so far as it is in our power to command them. I would only observe, that their intensity is in general greatly overrated, in consequence of certain accessory pleasures of the imagination or of the heart, which are commonly associated with them. By means of these, too, their grossness is kept out of view, and they appear with many borrowed attractions to the inexperienced and unsuspecting minds of youth. No epicure is to be found who will openly plead the cause of private and solitary sensuality; or who will maintain that our animal gratifications would form an important part of human happiness, if divested of those recommendations which they derive from the fancy, and from the social enjoyments with which they are blended.

But whatever may be the intensity and the value of these pleasures during the time we enjoy them, it is altogether impossible to make them fill up any considerable portion of human life. Their province is circumscribed by nature within very narrow bounds, and every attempt to extend these frustrates its own purpose. It does not appear, therefore, that nature intended that the pursuit of them should be considered as a serious or important object; and, indeed, wherever this is suffered to take place, it is at the expense of all the worthier principles of our constitution. Health, and fortune, and fame seldom fail to fall sacrifices in the progress of the evil which, in its last stage, destroys the intellectual powers and the moral sensibilities, and produces a languor and depression of mind which is the completion of human misery.

To all this it may be added, that the pleasures of sense are confined to the very moment of gratification, affording no satisfaction in the retrospect, like that which follows our intellectual exertions, and still more our good actions.

The result of these observations is, *not* that the pleasures of sense are unworthy the regard of a wise man, but that they should be confined within those limits which are marked out by the obvious intentions of nature. That they are to be enjoyed in the greatest perfection in a life of virtue, we have the testimony of Epicurus himself; according to whose system prudence, temperance, and the other virtues, derive all their value from their tendency to increase the sum of bodily enjoyment, and to lessen that of bodily suffering,—a most erroneous and absurd doctrine undoubtedly, when considered in connexion with the theory of morals, but highly interesting in a *practical* light, as an acknowledgment from the professed votaries of pleasure, that a life of virtue (even if our views did not extend beyond the present scene) is the truest wisdom.

[SUBSECT.] III.—*Pleasures of the Imagination.*

The Pleasures of the *Imagination* are unquestionably of a higher rank than those of *Sense*, and may be protracted to a much longer period without any danger of injuring the health, or of impairing the faculties, or of exhausting that inestimable fund of constitutional enjoyment, which we commonly express by the phrase *animal spirits*. On the contrary, they have a tendency to raise the taste above the grossness of sensuality, and to diminish the temptation to vicious indulgences, by furnishing agreeable and innocent resources for filling up the blanks of life. By supplying us, too, with pleasures more refined than those the senses afford, they gradually prepare us for the still higher enjoyments which belong to us as rational and moral beings; and indeed, when properly regulated, they may be rendered subservient, in a high degree, both to our intellectual and moral improvement.

Even to this class of our pleasures, however, certain limits are prescribed by nature; for although in enjoying them the

mind is not quite so passive as in receiving the gratifications of sense, yet many of its most important principles are left wholly unemployed; and accordingly, when they are prolonged beyond their due bounds, we lose all relish for them, and feel a desire of more active and more interesting engagements. I shall not insist at present on the effects which result to the moral character from an excessive indulgence in the pleasures of the Imagination, in consequence of their tendency to unfit us for action, and to give us a disrelish for real life, as my object in these observations is merely to consider them as sources of enjoyment. I have treated besides of this subject at some length in the first volume of the *Philosophy of the Human Mind.**

[SUBSECT.] IV.—*Pleasures of the Understanding.*

The Pleasures which I have referred to the *Understanding* might perhaps have been characterized more explicitly, "as pleasures arising from the exercise of our reasoning and of our inventive powers." Of this kind is the pleasure of *investigation*, (which resolves partly into the pleasure of activity, partly into that resulting from the employment of skill, partly into that arising from expectation and hope, or, in other words, from the anticipation of discovery.) 2. The pleasure of *generalization*, or of rising from particular truths to comprehensive theorems,—a process which, beside the satisfaction it yields by the relief it brings to the memory, communicates to us a sentiment of our intellectual power, by subjecting completely to our command a mass of information which before only served to distract our attention, and to oppress our faculties. 3. To all this we may add, the pleasure resulting from the gratification of *curiosity*, and from the discovery of *truth*, of which I had formerly occasion to treat under the article of the Active Powers.† With these pleasures, too, which are peculiar to the understanding, various accessory ones are combined; the pleasure (for example) of extensive utility, when our studies happen to be directed to objects interesting to mankind; the pleasure

* [Chap. vii.—*Supra*, *Works*, Vol. II. pp. 431-470.]

† [*Works*, Vol. VI. pp. 5, 6, 131-135.]

arising from the gratification of ambition; and the social satisfaction of communicating our knowledge to others. Perhaps, however, the principal recommendation of this class of our pleasures is derived from the constant and inexhaustible resources they supply to the mind in its progress through life. In this respect they possess many advantages over the pleasures of imagination; not only as they depend much less on the state of the spirits, but as they may be extended to a much longer period without satiety or a desire of change, and are frequently enjoyed with increasing relish in old age; while, on the other hand, the objects which interest the imagination gradually lose their charms when we begin to engage in the business of the world, and furnish at best but an amusement and relaxation to diversify our habitual and more serious occupations. Upon the whole, among the various *subordinate* pursuits to which men are led to devote themselves by inclination or taste, (I say *subordinate*, for I do not speak at present of our moral duties,) a turn for science may be safely pronounced to be the happiest of any; and *that* which we may venture with the greatest confidence to recommend to youth as the most solid foundation for the future comfort of their lives; more particularly when we consider how very little the pleasures of the understanding depend on external circumstances, and on the caprice of fortune. The happiest individuals certainly whom I have happened to know have been men, who, with a due relish for the pleasures of imagination, have devoted themselves steadily and ardently to philosophical pursuits, and more particularly to the study of the severer sciences.

[Subsect.] V.—*Pleasures of the Heart.*

Under this title I comprehend the Pleasures of Benevolence, of Friendship, of Love, of Pity, of enjoying the Favour and Esteem of others, and above all, the pleasure resulting from the consciousness of doing our Duty;—the purest and most exquisite enjoyments undoubtedly of which we have any experience; and which, by blending in one way or other with our other gratifications, impart to them their principal charm.

This has been often remarked with respect to the pleasures of Sense; and the same remark may be extended to the pleasures of Activity and of the Understanding.

The practical conclusion resulting from the inquiry is, that the wisest plan of economy, with respect to our pleasures, is not merely compatible with a strict observance of the rules of morality, but is, in a great measure, comprehended in these rules; and therefore, that the happiness, as well as the perfection of our nature, consists in doing our duty with as little solicitude about the event as is consistent with the weakness of humanity. Nothing is indeed more remarkable in this view of human nature than the tendency of virtuous habits to systematize the conduct for the purpose of happiness, and to open up all the various sources of enjoyment in our constitution without suffering any one to encroach upon the rest. They establish a proper balance among our different principles of action, and by doing so produce a greater sum of enjoyment on the whole, than we could have obtained by allowing any one in particular to gain an ascendant over our conduct. It was from a mistaken view of this very important fact that the Epicurean system of old arose, as well as those modern theories which represent *Virtue* as only a different name for rational *Self-love*. They indeed coincide so wonderfully together, as to illustrate, in the most striking manner, the *unity* as well as the *beneficence* of design in the human constitution. But still, (as I before remarked,) notwithstanding these happy effects of a virtuous life, the principle of Duty and the desire of Happiness are radically distinct from each other. The peace of mind, indeed, which is the immediate reward of good actions, and the sense of merit with which they are accompanied, create, independently of experience, a very strong presumption in favour of the connexion between Happiness and Virtue; but the facts in human life which justify this conclusion are not obvious to careless spectators; nor would philosophers in every age have agreed so unanimously in adopting it, if they had not been led to the truth by a shorter and more direct process, than an examination of the remote consequences of virtuous and of vicious conduct.

To this observation it may be added, that if the desire of happiness were the sole, or even the ruling principle of action in a good man, it could scarcely fail to frustrate its own object, by filling his mind with anxious conjectures about futurity, and with perplexing calculations of the various chances of good and evil; whereas he, whose ruling principle of action is a sense of duty, conducts himself in the business of life with boldness, consistency, and dignity; and finds himself rewarded by that happiness which so often eludes the pursuit of those who exert every faculty of the mind in order to attain it.

CHAPTER V.

[GENERAL RESULT:—OF THE NATURE AND ESSENCE OF VIRTUE.]

SECT. I.—OF THE DIFFERENT THEORIES WHICH HAVE BEEN FORMED CONCERNING THE OBJECT OF MORAL APPROBATION.

It was before remarked, that the different theories of Virtue which have prevailed in modern times, have arisen chiefly from attempts to trace all the branches of our duty to one principle of action; such as a rational Self-love, Benevolence, Justice, or a disposition to obey the Will of God.

That none of these theories is agreeable to fact, may be collected from the reasonings which have been already stated. The harmony, however, which exists among our various good dispositions, and their general coincidence in determining us to the same course of life, bestows on all of them, when skilfully proposed, a certain degree of plausibility.

The systematical spirit from which they have taken their rise, although a fertile source of error, has not been without its use; inasmuch as it has roused the attention of ingenious men to the most important of all studies, that of the end and destination of human life. The facility, at the same time, with which so great a variety of consequences may all be traced from distinct principles, affords a demonstration of that unity and consistency of design, which is still more conspicuous in the moral than in the material world.

SECT. II.—OF THE GENERAL DEFINITION OF VIRTUE.

Having taken a cursory survey of the chief branches of our Duty, we are prepared to enter on the general question con-

cerning the *Nature and Essence of Virtue.* In fixing on the arrangement of this part of my subject, it appeared to me more agreeable to the established rules of philosophizing, to consider, first, our duties in detail; and after having thus laid a solid foundation in the way of analysis, to attempt to rise to the *general idea* in which all our duties concur, than to circumscribe our inquiries, at our first outset, within the limits of an arbitrary and partial definition. What I have now to offer, therefore, will consist of little more than some obvious and necessary consequences from principles which have been already stated.

The various duties which have been considered, all agree with each other in one common quality, that of being *obligatory* on rational and voluntary agents; and they are all enjoined by the same authority,—*the authority of Conscience.* These duties, therefore, are but different articles of *one law,* which is properly expressed by the word *Virtue.*

An observation to the same purpose is put into the mouth of Socrates by Plato. "So likewise concerning the virtues; though they are many and various, there is one common idea belonging to them all, by which they are virtues." *Οὕτω δὴ καὶ περὶ τῶν ἀρετῶν, κἂν εἰ πολλαὶ καὶ παντοδαπαί εἰσιν, ἕν γέ τι εἶδος ταὐτὸν ἅπασαι ἔχουσι δι' ὃ εἰσὶν ἀρεταί.*[1]

As all the virtues are enjoined by the same authority, (the authority of Conscience,) the man whose ruling principle of action is a sense of duty, will observe all the different virtues with the same reverence and the same zeal. He who lives in the *habitual* neglect of any one of them shows plainly, that where his conduct happens to coincide with what the rules of morality prescribe, it is owing merely to an accidental agreement between his duty and his inclination; and that he is not actuated by that motive which can alone render our conduct meritorious. It is justly said, therefore, that to live in the habitual practice of any one vice, is to throw off our allegiance to conscience and to our Maker, as decidedly as if we had violated all the rules which duty prescribes; and it is in this

[1] In *Menone,* editio Serrani, Tom. II. p. 72, [§ iv.]

sense, I presume, that we ought to interpret that passage of the Sacred Writings, in which it is said, "*He who keepeth the whole law, and offendeth in one point, is guilty of all.*"

The word *Virtue*, however, (as I shall have occasion to remark more particularly in the next section,) is applied not only to express a particular course of external conduct, but to express *a particular species or description of human character.* When so applied, it seems properly to denote a *habit* of mind, as distinguished from *occasional acts* of duty. It was formerly said that the characters of men receive their denominations of covetous, voluptuous, ambitious, &c., from the particular active principle which prevailingly influences the conduct. A man, accordingly, whose ruling or habitual principle of action is a sense of duty, or a regard to what is right, may be properly denominated virtuous. Agreeably to this view of the subject, the ancient Pythagoreans defined Virtue to be Ἕξις τοῦ δέοντος;[1] the oldest definition of Virtue of which we have any account, and one of the most unexceptionable which is yet to be found in any system of philosophy.

This account of virtue coincides very nearly with what I conceive to be Dr. Reid's, from some passages in his *Essays on the Active Powers of Man.** Virtue he seems to consider as consisting "in a fixed purpose or resolution to act according to our sense of duty."

"Suppose a man," says he, "to have exercised his intellectual and moral faculties so far as to have distinct notions of justice and injustice, and of the consequences of both, and after due deliberation to have formed a fixed purpose to adhere

[1] Gale's *Opuscula Mythologica*, &c. p. 690.

[The edition of Gale here quoted is the second, that of Amsterdam, 1688.—The definition of Virtue adduced in the text is by the Pseudo-Theages; is by him repeated, p. 693; and is likewise given by the Pseudo-Archytas, p. 678. As Mr. Stewart observes, it is unexceptionable, being an improvement upon Aristotle; and *Deontology* (the doctrine of Duty) is an excellent name for Ethics, and has been actually so applied by an English philosopher since the publication of the present book.—I have had occasion, once and again, to notice, that the Pythagorean Fragments are all spurious. See of this Work, Vol. I. pp. 105, 322, and Vol. II. p. 304.—*Ed.*]

* [Essay II. chap. iii.; *Works*, p. 540.]

inflexibly to justice, and never to handle the wages of iniquity:

"Is not this the man whom we should call a just man? We consider the moral virtues as inherent in the mind of a good man, even where there is no opportunity of exercising them. And what is it in the mind which we can call the virtue of justice when it is not exercised? It can be nothing but a fixed purpose or determination to act according to the rules of justice when there is opportunity."

With all this I perfectly agree. It is the fixed purpose to do what is *right*, which evidently constitutes what we call *a virtuous disposition*. But it appears to me that virtue, considered as an attribute of character, is more properly defined by the *habit* which the fixed purpose gradually forms, than by the fixed purpose itself. It is from the external habit alone that other men can judge of the purpose; and it is from the uniformity and spontaneity of his habit that the individual himself must judge how far his purposes are sincere and steady.

I have said that this account of *Virtue* coincides with the definition of it given by the ancient Pythagoreans; and it also coincides with the opinion of Aristotle, by whom the ethical doctrine of the Pythagoreans was rendered much more complete and satisfactory. According to this philosopher the different virtues are "*practical habits, voluntary in their origin*, and agreeable to right reason."[1] This last philosopher seems indeed to have considered the subject of *habits* in general more attentively than any other writer of antiquity; and he has suggested some important hints with respect to them, which well

[1] "Ἕξεις πρακτικαὶ,—ἐφ' ἡμῖν,—καὶ ἑκούσιοι, &c.—(Aristotle's [*Nicomachian*] *Ethics*, Book III. chap. v.) Immediately after, Aristotle excellently observes, (from an evident anxiety to impress on his readers the necessary dependence of Morality on the Free-agency of Man;) "Actions and Habits are not precisely in the same sense voluntary; the former are voluntary throughout, from beginning to end; but the beginnings only of habits, which gain force, like maladies, by degrees, until they become irresistible; even these, however, are also voluntary, since their causes were such, namely, the actions by which they were formed."—*Aristotle's Ethics and Politics*, by Dr. Gillies, Vol. I. p. 308.—[See also *Mag. Mor.* Lib. I. cap. i.]

deserve the attention of those who may turn their thoughts to this very interesting class of facts in the human constitution.

In referring to these doctrines of the ancient schools, I am far from proceeding on the supposition, that questions of science are to be decided by authority. But I own it always appears to me to afford a strong presumption in favour of any conclusion concerning the principles of human nature, when we find it sanctioned by the judgment of those who have been led to it by separate and independent processes of reasoning. For the same reason I think it of consequence to remark the coincidence between the account now given of *Virtue* and that of Mr. Hobbes, one of the most sceptical, but, at the same time, one of the most acute and original of our English metaphysicians. "Virtue," says he, "is the *habit* of doing according to those laws of Nature that tend to our preservation; and Vice is the *habit* of doing the contrary."* The definition, indeed, is faulty, in so far as it involves the author's selfish theory of morals; but in considering the word *virtue* as expressive of a *habit of action*, it approaches nearer to the truth than the greater part of the definitions of virtue to be found in the writings of the moderns.

These observations lead to an explanation of what has at first sight the appearance of paradox in the ethical doctrines of Aristotle, that where there is self-denial there is no virtue. That the merit of particular actions is increased by the self-denial with which they are accompanied cannot be disputed; but it is only when we are *learning* the practice of our duties that this self-denial is exercised, (for the practice of morality, as well as of everything else, is facilitated by repeated acts;) and therefore, if the word virtue be employed to express that *habit* of mind which it is the great object of a good man to confirm, it will follow, that, in proportion as he approaches to it, his efforts of self-denial must diminish, and that all occasion for them would cease if his end were completely attained.

The definition of virtue given by Aristotle, as consisting in "right practical habits *voluntary in their origin*," is well

* [*De Corpore Politico*, Part I. chap. iv. § 14.—*Works*, in folio, p. 47.]

illustrated by what Plutarch has told us of the means by which he acquired the mastery over his irascible passions. "I have always approved," says he, "of the engagements and vows imposed on themselves from motives of religion, by certain philosophers, to abstain from wine, or from some other favourite indulgence, for the space of a year. I have also approved of the determination taken by others not to deviate from the truth, even in the lightest conversation, during a particular period. Comparing my own mind with theirs, and conscious that I yielded to none of them in reverence for God, I tasked myself, in the first instance, not to give way to anger, upon any occasion for several days. I afterwards extended this resolution to a month or longer; and having thus made a trial of what I could do, I have learned at length never to speak but with gentleness, and so carefully to watch over my temper as never to purchase the short and unprofitable gratification of venting my resentment at the expense of a lasting and humiliating remorse."[1]

I must not dismiss this topic without recommending, not merely to the perusal, but to the diligent study of all who have a taste for moral inquiries, Aristotle's *Nicomachian Ethics*, in which he has examined, with far greater accuracy than any other author of antiquity, the nature of *habits* considered in their relation to our moral constitution. The whole treatise is indeed of great value, and, with the exception of a few passages, almost justifies the very warm and unqualified eulogium pronounced upon it by a learned divine (Dr. Rennel) before the University of Cambridge,—an eulogium in which he goes so very far as to assert of this work, "that it affords not only the most perfect specimen of scientific morality, but exhibits also the powers of the most compact and best constructed system *which the human intellect ever produced upon any subject;* enlivening occasionally great severity of method, and strict precision of terms, by the sublimest though soberest splendour of diction."[2]

[1] *De Ira* [*Cohibenda. Opera*, editiones Xylandri, Tom. II. p. 453, *seq.*]

[2] Quoted by Dr. Gillies, Vol. I. p. 527.

For the use of *English* readers an excellent translation of Aristotle's *Ethics* and also of his *Politics* has been published by Dr. Gillies; and indeed I do not know of any treatises, among the many remains of antiquity, which could have been selected as a more important accession to the stock of our national literature.

SECT. III.—ON AN AMBIGUITY IN THE WORDS RIGHT AND WRONG, VIRTUE AND VICE.

The epithets Right and Wrong, Virtuous and Vicious, are applied sometimes to *external actions*, and sometimes to the *intentions of the agent*. A similar ambiguity may be remarked in the corresponding words in other languages.

This ambiguity is owing to various causes, which it is not necessary at present to trace. Among other circumstances, it is owing to the association of ideas, which, as it leads us to connect notions of elegance or of meanness with many arbitrary expressions in language, so it often leads us to connect notions of Right and Wrong with *external actions*, considered abstractly from the motives which produced them. It is owing (at least in part) to this, that a man who has been involuntarily the author of any calamity to another, can hardly by any reasoning banish his feelings of remorse; and, on the other hand, however wicked our *purposes* may have been, if by any accident we have been prevented from carrying them into execution, we are apt to consider ourselves as far less culpable than if we had perpetrated the crimes that we had intended. It is much in the same manner that we think it less criminal to mislead others by hints, or looks, or actions, than by a verbal lie; and in general, that we think our guilt diminished if we can only contrive to accomplish our ends without employing those external *signs*, or those external *means*, with which we have been accustomed to associate the notions of guilt and infamy. Shakespeare has painted with philosophical accuracy this natural subterfuge of a vicious mind, in which the sense

of duty still retains some authority, in one of the exquisite scenes between King John and Hubert:—

> " Hadst thou but shook thy head, and made a pause
> When I spake darkly what I purposed;
> Or turn'd an eye of doubt upon my face;
> Or bade me *tell my tale in express words;*
> Deep shame had struck me dumb, made me break off,
> And those thy fears might have wrought fears in me.
> But thou didst understand me *by my signs,*
> And didst *in signs again parley with sin.*"

As this twofold application of the words Right and Wrong to the intentions of the mind, and to external actions, has a tendency, in the common business of life, to affect our opinions concerning the merits of individuals, so it has misled the theoretical speculations of some very eminent philosophers in their inquiries concerning the principles of morals. It was to obviate the confusion of ideas arising from this ambiguity of language that the distinction between *absolute and relative rectitude* was introduced into ethics; and as the distinction is equally just and important, it will be proper to explain it particularly, and to point out its application to one or two of the questions which have been perplexed by that vagueness of expression which it is our object at present to correct.

An action may be said to be absolutely right, when it is in every respect suitable to the circumstances in which the agent is placed; or, in other words, when it is such as, with perfectly good intentions, under the guidance of an enlightened and well-informed understanding, he would have performed.

An action may be said to be relatively right, when the intentions of the agent are sincerely good, whether his conduct be suitable to his circumstances or not.

According to these definitions, an action may be right in one sense and wrong in another; an ambiguity in language, which, how obvious soever, has not always been attended to by the writers on morals.

It is the relative rectitude of an action which determines the moral desert of the agent; but it is its absolute rectitude which

determines its utility to his worldly interests, and to the welfare of society. And it is only so far as absolute and relative rectitude coincide, that utility can be affirmed to be a quality of virtue.

A strong sense of duty will indeed induce us to avail ourselves of all the talents we possess, and of all the information within our reach, to act agreeably to the rules of absolute rectitude. And if we fail in doing so, our negligence is criminal. "Crimes committed through ignorance," as Aristotle has very judiciously observed, "are only excusable when the ignorance is involuntary; for when the cause of it lies in ourselves, it is then justly punishable. The ignorance of those laws which all may know if they will, does not excuse the breach of them; and neglect is not pardonable where attention ought to be bestowed. But perhaps we are incapable of attention. This, however, is our own fault; since the incapacity has been contracted by our continual carelessness; as the evils of injustice and intemperance are contracted by the daily commission of iniquity, and the daily indulgence in voluptuousness. For such as our actions are, such must our habits become."[1]

Notwithstanding, however, the truth and the importance of this doctrine, the general principle already stated remains incontrovertible, that in *every particular instance* our duty consists in doing what appears to us to be *right* at the time; and if, while we follow this rule, we should incur any blame, our demerit does not arise from acting according to an erroneous judgment, but from our previous misemployment of the means we possessed for correcting the errors to which our judgment is liable.[2]

From these principles it follows, that actions, although materially right, are not meritorious with respect to the agent, unless performed from a sense of duty. This conclusion, indeed, has been disputed by Mr. Hume, upon grounds which

[1] *Aristotle's Ethics*, by Gillies, p. 305. [In the original, Book III. chap. v. Wilkinson's edition.]

[2] A distinction similar to that now made between absolute and relative rectitude was expressed among the schoolmen by the phrases *material* and *formal virtue*.

I cannot stop to examine;[1] but its truth is necessarily implied in the foregoing reasonings, and it is perfectly consonant to the sentiments of the soundest moralists, both ancient and modern. Aristotle inculcates this doctrine in many parts of his *Ethics*. In one passage he represents it as essential to virtuous actions, that the actions are done—ἕνεκα τοῦ καλοῦ:[2] and in another place he says—ἔστι γὰρ αὐτὴ ἡ εὐπραξία τέλος.[3]

To the same purpose also Lord Shaftesbury.* "In this case alone it is we call any creature worthy or virtuous, when it can attain to the speculation or science of what is morally good or ill, admirable or blameable, right or wrong. For though we may vulgarly call an ill horse vicious; yet we never say of a good one, nor of any mere changeling or idiot, though never so good-natured, that he is worthy or virtuous. So that if a creature be generous, kind, constant, and compassionate, yet if he cannot reflect on what he himself does or sees others do, so as to take notice of what is worthy or honest, and make that notice or conception of worth and honesty to be an object of his affection, he has not the character of being virtuous, for thus, and no otherwise, he is capable of having a sense of Right or Wrong." And elsewhere he observes, "that if that which restrains a person and holds him to a virtuous-like behaviour, be no affection towards virtue or goodness itself, but towards private good merely, he is not in reality the more virtuous."[4]

[1] *Treatise of Human Nature*, Vol. III. p. 41, *et seq.* First edition, [Book III. Part ii. sect. 1.] "I suppose a person to have lent me a sum of money," &c. &c.

[2] Αἱ δὲ κατ' ἀρετὴν πράξεις καλαὶ, καὶ τοῦ καλοῦ ἕνεκα. *Eth. Nic.* Lib. IV. cap. i. —[See also *Mag. Mor.* Lib. I. cap. i.]

[3] *Eth. Nic.* Lib. VI. cap. v.

* [*Characteristics*, Vol. II.—*Inquiry concerning Virtue and Merit*, Book I. Part ii. sect. 3, p. 30, edition 1711.]

[4] Dr. Price, in his *Review*, has made a number of judicious observations on this subject, [see especially chap. viii.]; and Dr. Reid, in his *Essays on the Active Powers of Man*, has a particular chapter allotted to the consideration of this very question, "*Whether an action deserving moral approbation must be done with the belief of its being morally good?*" [Essay V. chap. iv. *Works*, p. 646, *seq.*] In this the doctrine he endeavours to establish in opposition to Mr. Hume, is precisely the same with that which has been now stated. "The fallacy of Mr. Hume's reasoning," he observes, "arises from the double sense of the words *moral goodness*. We ascribe it to actions considered abstractly, without any relation to the agent. We likewise ascribe moral goodness to an

SECT. IV.—OF THE OFFICE AND USE OF REASON IN THE PRACTICE OF MORALITY.

I formerly observed that a strong sense of duty, while it leads us to cultivate with care our good dispositions, will induce us to avail ourselves of all the means in our power for the wise regulation of our external conduct. The occasions on which it is necessary for us to employ our *Reason* in this way are chiefly the *three* following:—

1. When we have ground for suspecting that our moral judgments and feelings may have been warped and perverted by the prejudices of education.

I formerly showed that the moral faculty is an original principle of the human constitution, and not the result (as Mandeville and others suppose) of habits superinduced by systems of education planned by politicians and divines. The moral faculty indeed, like the faculty of reason, (which forms the most essential of its elements,) requires care and cultivation for its development; and, like reason, it has a gradual progress, both in the case of individuals and of societies. But

agent on account of an action he has done. With respect to the agent, a good action is undoubtedly that in which he applied his intellectual powers properly, in order to judge what he ought to do, and acted according to his best judgment. This is all that can be required of a moral agent, and in this his moral goodness in any good action consists. But is this the goodness which we ascribe to an action considered abstractly? No, surely. Goodness in an action considered abstractly lies in this, and in this only, that it is an action which ought to be done by those who have the power and opportunity, and the capacity to perceive their obligation to do it. Now, it is evident that the goodness of an action considered abstractly can have no dependence upon the opinion or belief of an agent, any more than the truth of a proposition depends upon our believing it to be true. But when a man exerts his active powers well or ill, there is a moral goodness or turpitude which we figuratively impute to the action, but which is truly and properly imputable to the man only; and this goodness or turpitude depends *very much* upon the intention and the opinion he had of his action."

The only correction I would beg leave to make on the foregoing passage is, that, whereas Dr. Reid says, "the goodness or turpitude of an action depends *very much* upon the intention of the agent, and the opinion he had of his action," I would say that it depends on these circumstances *entirely* or *solely*. This indeed is a consequence following necessarily from his own principles.

it does not follow from this that the former is a factitious principle any more than the latter, with respect to the origin of which I do not know that any doubts have been suggested by the greatest sceptics.

Although, however, the moral faculty is an original part of the human frame, and although the great laws of morality are engraven on every heart, it is not in this way that the greater part of mankind arrive at their first knowledge of them. The infant mind is formed by the care of our early instructors, and for a long time thinks and acts in consequence of the confidence it reposes in their superior judgment. All this is undoubtedly agreeable to the design of Nature, and, indeed, if the case were otherwise, the business of the world could not possibly go on; for nothing can be plainer than this, that the multitude, (at least as society is actually constituted,) condemned as they are to laborious employments, inconsistent with the cultivation of their mental faculties, are wholly incapable of forming their own opinions on the most important questions which can occupy the human mind. It is evident, at the same time, that, as no system of education can be perfect, many prejudices must mingle with the most important and best ascertained truths; and as the truths and the prejudices are both acquired from the same source, the incontrovertible evidence of the one serves, in the progress of human reason, to support and confirm the other. Hence the suspicious and jealous eye with which we ought to regard all those principles which we have at first adopted without due examination,—a duty doubly incumbent on those whose opinions are likely, from their rank and situation in society, to influence those of the multitude, and whose errors may eventually be instrumental in impairing the morals and the happiness of generations yet unborn.*

2. A second instance in which the exercise of *Reason* may be requisite for an enlightened discharge of our *duty*, occurs in those cases where there appears to be an interference between *different duties*, and where, of course, it seems to be necessary to sacrifice one duty to another.

*[See above, *Elements*, &c., Vol. I. p. 67, *seq.*]

In the course of the foregoing speculations I have frequently taken notice of the coincidence of all our virtuous principles of action, in pointing out to us the same line of conduct, and of the systematical consistency and harmony which they have a tendency to produce in the moral character. Notwithstanding, however, this general and indisputable *fact*, it must be owned that cases sometimes occur in which they seem at first view to interfere with each other, and in which, of consequence, the exact path of duty is not altogether so obvious as it commonly is. Thus, every man feels it incumbent on him to have a constant regard to *the welfare of society*, and also to *his own happiness*. *On the whole*, these two interests will be found, by the most superficial inquirer, to be inseparably connected; but, at the same time, it cannot be denied that cases may be fancied in which it seems necessary to make a sacrifice of the one to the other.

In such cases when the public happiness is very great, and the private comparatively inconsiderable, there is no room for hesitation; but the former may be easily conceived to be diminished, and the latter to be increased to such an amount as to render the exact propriety of conduct very doubtful; more especially when it is considered, that, *cæteris paribus*, a certain degree of preference to ourselves is not only justifiable but morally *right*. In like manner the attachments of nature or of friendship, or the obligations of gratitude, of veracity, or of justice, may interfere with private or public good; and it may not be easy to say, whether *all* of these obligations may not sometimes be superseded by paramount considerations of *utility*. At least these are points on which moralists have been arguing for some thousands of years, without having yet come to a determination in which all parties are agreed. It is much in the same manner that the different foundations of *property* may give rise to different *claims;* and it may be exceedingly difficult to determine, among a variety of *titles*, which of them is entitled to a preference over the others.

The consideration of these nice and puzzling questions in the science of *Ethics* has given rise in modern times to a par-

ticular department of it, distinguished by the title of *Casuistry;* the great object of which is to lay down general rules or canons for directing us *how* to act, wherever there is any room for doubt or hesitation; and which (in the opinion of Mr. Smith) has attracted more notice than it would otherwise have done, in consequence of the practice of auricular confession in Roman Catholic countries.

The absurdity of Casuistry is now so universally admitted, that it is unnecessary to enlarge upon it. The combinations of circumstances into which individuals may be thrown by the accidents of life may be so infinitely diversified, that it is impossible to comprehend them all in any general description; and, therefore, all that the moralist can reasonably attempt is to inculcate those good principles, and to recommend those good dispositions, which in their *general tendency* are likely to insure a virtuous conduct; leaving to individuals the task of exercising their own judgments on those incalculable contingencies in which they may be called on to act.

3. When the ends at which our duty prompts us to aim are to be accomplished by means which require choice and deliberation.

Even if the whole of virtue consisted in following steadily one principle of action, still reason would be necessary to direct us to the means. The truth is, nature only recommends certain ends, leaving to ourselves the selection of the most efficient means by which these ends may be obtained. Thus all moralists, whatever may be their particular system, agree in this, that it is one of the chief branches of our duty to promote to the utmost of our power the happiness of that society of which we are members; but the most ardent zeal for the attainment of this object can be of no avail, unless reason be employed both in ascertaining what are the real constituents of social and political happiness, and by what means this happiness may be most effectually advanced and secured.

It is owing to the last of these considerations that the study of happiness, both private and public, becomes an important part of the science of Ethics. Indeed, without this study, the

best dispositions of the heart, whether relating to ourselves or to others, may be in a great measure useless.

The subject of happiness, so far as relates to the individual, has been already considered. The great extent and difficulty of those inquiries which have for their object to ascertain what constitutes the happiness of a community, and by what means it may be most effectually promoted, make it necessary to separate them from the other questions of Ethics, and to form them into a distinct branch of the science.

It is not, however, in this respect alone that Politics is connected with the other branches of Moral Philosophy. The provisions which nature has made for the intellectual and moral progress of the species, all suppose the existence of the political union; and the particular form which this union happens in the case of any community to assume, determines many of the most important circumstances in the character of the people, and many of those opinions and habits which affect the happiness of private life.

These observations which represent Politics as a branch of Moral Philosophy, have been sanctioned by the opinions of all those authors, both in ancient and modern times, by whom either the one or the other has been cultivated with much success. Among the former it is sufficient to mention the names of Plato and Aristotle, both of whom, but more especially the latter, have left us works on the general principles of policy and government, which may be read with the highest advantage at the present day. As to Socrates, his studies seem to have been chiefly directed to inculcate the duties of private life; and yet in the beautiful enumeration which Xenophon has given of his favourite pursuits, the science of Politics is expressly mentioned as an important branch of the philosophy of human nature. "As for himself, *man*, and what related to man, were the only subjects on which he chose to employ himself. To this purpose all his inquiries and conversations turned on what was pious, what impious; what honourable, what base; what just, what unjust; what wisdom, what folly; what courage, what cowardice; what a state or political community;

what the character of a statesman or a politician; what a government of men, what the character of one equal to such a government. It was on these and other matters of the same kind that he used to discourse, in which subjects those who were knowing he used to esteem men of honour and goodness, and those who were ignorant to be no better than the basest of slaves."[1]

In modern times the intimate relation between Ethics and Politics, and the easy transition by which the one perpetually leads the thoughts to the other, may be distinctly traced in the speculations of Grotius, of Locke, of Fenelon, of Montesquieu, of Turgot, of Smith, and (with a very few exceptions) of all that class of writers in France who were distinguished by the name of Economists. I mention these examples chiefly to show that it is not in consequence of any capricious and arbitrary arrangement that these two branches of science are referred to the same academical department in some of our modern universities; and to illustrate, by an appeal to literary history, the imperfection of those systems of politics which are not founded on the previous study of the nature and duties of man.

[1] Mrs. [Miss] Fielding's Translation of Xenophon's *Memorabilia*. [In the original, Book I. chap. i. sect. 16.]

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS

TO

BOOKS THIRD AND FOURTH.

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

NOTE A, (Book III. p. 30.)—*Various Hypotheses in explanation of the Activity apparent in the Universe.*

The object of this Note is to give a slight view of some of the most noted Hypotheses which have been formed to account for the Active Powers exhibited in the Universe.

I.—The first is that of *Materialism*, according to which the phenomena of nature are the result of certain *active powers essentially inherent in Matter.*

Of this doctrine there are very early traces in the history of metaphysical science. The oldest philosophers in Phœnicia and Greece, of whom we have any account, appear to have founded their physical systems on three suppositions. 1*st*, That of a *Vacuum;* 2*d*, That of *Atoms;* and, 3*d*, That of the *Gravity of Atoms.* This doctrine of Atoms (according to Posidonius the Stoic, as cited by Strabo and Sextus Empiricus) was more ancient than the times of the Trojan war, having been taught by Moschus, a Phœnician. There is reason to believe that the more ancient Atomists taught[1] that there were living principles also, which existed before the union of the systems of these elementary corpuscles, and continued to exist after their dissolution; and that they saw the necessity of admitting Active as well as Passive principles, Life as well as Mechanism in the system of the universe. In the progress, however, of philosophical speculation among the Greeks this doctrine came to be simplified, and the hypotheses of Active Incorporeal substances to be rejected. Democritus, in particular, and afterwards Epicurus, attempted to account for the phenomena of nature from Matter and Motion only, and considered Gravity as an essential property of Atoms, by which they are perpetually in motion, or making an effort to move, and have done so from eternity.

In modern times this doctrine has appeared in various forms. Even some authors, whom it would be most uncandid and unjust to call Materialists, have occasionally expressed themselves in a manner too favourable to it. "Matter, as

[1] Maclaurin's *Account of Sir Isaac Newton's Philosophical Discoveries.* Second Edition, p. 26, *et seq.* See also Cudworth's *Intellectual System*, Book I. chap. i.

far as we can discover," says Lord Kames, "is certainly not endued with thought or voluntary motion, and yet that it is endued with a power of motion in certain circumstances appears to me an extreme clear point. Dropping a stone from a high tower, it falls to the ground without any external impulse as far as we can observe. Here is an effect produced which every one who has not studied philosophy will attribute to a *power* in the stone itself. One would not hesitate to draw this conclusion should the stone move upwards; and yet, setting aside habit and custom, it must be evident that a stone can as little move downwards as upwards without a *vis motrix*. And that this is a just as well as a natural way of thinking will appear by analogy. When a man is in motion we readily ascribe the effect produced to a power which he possesses to move his limbs. Why then do philosophers deny to the stone in the act of falling the power of beginning motion, a power which they so readily ascribe to man? If it be objected that man is a being endued with a power of moving himself, and of moving other things, the plain answer is, that these are facts which we learn no other way than by experience, and we have the same experience for a voucher, that a stone set free in the air will move itself. And if it be farther urged that man is a thinking being, the answer will readily occur, that a power of beginning visible motion is no more connected with a power of thinking than it is with any other property of matter or spirit. Nay, Mr. Locke holds that matter may be endowed with a power of thinking, and supposing this power superadded to the other properties of matter, it cannot be maintained that matter would be rendered thereby more or less capable of beginning or continuing visible motion."[1]

In considering the history of philosophical opinions, there is nothing so amusing and instructive as to examine the natural prejudices from which they have taken their rise, and to account for their diversity by the different points of view from which the same object has been surveyed by different observers. By attending to the state of science when a particular philosopher lived, we are sometimes able to catch the precise point from which his views were taken, and to perceive the object under the same aspect which it presented to him. In this manner we obtain a thread to guide us through the mazes of an apparent labyrinth: we systematize a seeming chaos of incoherent notions, and render the history of error and absurdity a source of important information with respect to the natural progress of the human mind.

I have elsewhere [vol. i. p. 200, *seq.*] mentioned some circumstances which render it probable that children conceive all objects animated, and that they ascribe the changes they see take place in them to an internal power similar to what they experience in themselves. The case is the same with *savages*, who conceive the sea, the earth, the sun, moon, and stars, rivers, fountains, and groves, to be active and animated beings. It is remarked by Raynal, that, "wherever savages see *motion* which they cannot account for, *there* they suppose a soul; and that when any piece of mechanism (such as a watch) is presented to them, for the first time, in a moving state, they are apt to suppose it to be *an animal*." Such then seems to be the natural and most obvious conclusions of the mind unenlightened by experience and reflection.

[1] *Essay on the Laws of Motion*, published in the *Essays Physical and Literary* of the Philosophical Society of Edinburgh.—[See also *Elements*, &c., Vol. II. p. 158, *seq.*]

The first efforts of philosophical inquiry could not fail to expose the absurdity of these ideas; and in proportion as physical causes came to be discovered, and the mutual connexions and dependencies of phenomena to be ascertained, matter would be gradually stripped of life and intelligence; a suspicion would arise, that connexions exist where we are unable to trace them, and that the universe is nothing but a vast machine. Even the active powers which put the machine in motion would, in the progress of speculative refinement, be considered as properties essential to matter, and on the same footing with its extension and figure. Thus *Mind*, which was at first supposed to animate every thing, comes, in process of time, to be banished from the universe; and even the phenomena of thought and volition, of which we are conscious, to be ascribed to a certain combination of Matter and Motion.

The language of the Newtonian philosophy, with respect to some of the qualities of Matter, is somewhat apt to encourage in superficial thinkers prejudices which lead to Materialism. Thus the words *attraction* and *gravitation* seem to express active powers essential to, and inherent in matter, and they have accordingly been severely censured by some of Sir Isaac's adversaries as involving that absurd and dangerous supposition. But whatever objections may be made to the language, it must not be forgotten that Sir Isaac himself employed these words merely to express a *fact*, and that he was at pains to guard his readers against that very misapprehension of his meaning which has been so often imputed to his philosophy. "Voces autem *attractionis*, *impulsus*, vel *propensionis cujuscunque in centrum*, indifferenter et pro se mutuo promiscue usurpo; has vires non physicè sed mathematicè tantum considerando. Unde caveat lector, ne per hujusmodi voces cogitet me speciem vel modum actionis causamve aut rationem physicam alicubi definire, vel centris (quæ sunt puncta mathematica) vires vere et physicè tribuere; si forte centra trahere, aut vires centrorum esse, dixero."[1]

The scheme of Materialism has been so accurately examined, and so fully refuted in a variety of excellent publications, (particularly in Dr. Clarke's book on *The Existence and Attributes of God*,) that a review of the controversy to which it has given rise would be superfluous and tedious, even if I had it in my power to enter upon the discussion without encroaching on more interesting speculations. The following very slight hints will, I hope, be sufficient for my purpose.

That a commencement of motion in a body formerly at rest implies the agency of mind, is a proposition involved in the only notions of body and mind that we are capable of forming: or rather, it is a proposition, the truth of which is known to us in the very same manner in which we know that body and mind exist. As sensation implies a sentient being, and thought a thinking being, so a commencement of motion implies a moving *power*, or, in other words, an *agent*. Our conclusions in these different instances are not the result of experience, but are perceptions of the understanding (or, in other words, judgments) necessarily accompanying our apprehension of the facts. In order to be satisfied of this, it is only necessary to consider, that wherever experience informs us of a connexion between two things, both of them must have been distinct and separate objects of our knowledge, so that the two may have been compared together, and their con-

[1] Definition viii. at the beginning of Newton's *Principia*.

nexion remarked. To suppose, therefore, that it is from experience we learn that sensation, thought, and a power of beginning motion are attributes of mind, is to take for granted that we have some knowledge of mind distinct from what we have of its attributes; whereas, in point of fact, (as I had formerly occasion to show,) Mind is not a direct object of our knowledge, and our only notion of it is a relative notion suggested by its operations of which we are conscious. Mind, we say, is *that* which feels, which thinks, which has the power of beginning motion; and therefore, the proposition, that sensation, thought, and the power of beginning motion, *are* attributes of mind, is not a fact resting on experience, but a truth involved in the only notion of mind we possess.

It has indeed been asserted by some philosophers, that it is from experience alone we know that a power of beginning motion is an attribute of mind; and, of consequence, that the same power *may* belong to matter for anything we can prove to the contrary. Thus, Lord Kames, in a passage already quoted from him, [p. 370,] has observed that "a power of beginning visible motion is no more connected with a power of thinking than it is with any other property of matter or spirit." And hence he concludes, that "it is experience alone, and not any consideration *a priori*, that can determine whether the power of beginning motion belongs *either* to matter or to mind. That *mind* has the power of beginning motion we know from our own consciousness: And have we not the very same evidence of our experience when we see a stone fall downwards, that a power of beginning motion belongs to the stone?"

To the greater part of this reasoning a sufficient answer may be collected from what has been already advanced; but there is one remark made by Lord Kames which requires a little farther consideration: "that a power of beginning visible motion is no more connected with a power of thinking than it is with any other property of matter or spirit." In favour of this observation it must, I think, be granted, that the power of thinking does not imply a power of beginning motion; for we can easily conceive beings possessed of the former without any share of the latter. But the converse of the proposition is not equally clear, that a power of beginning motion does not imply a power of thinking. On the contrary, it seems evident that it does imply it, for without thought how could the direction or the velocity of the motion be determined? *A commencement of motion, therefore, it would appear, not only implies an agent, but an agent possessed of the power of thinking.*

This conclusion will be strongly confirmed by attending to the motions arising from gravity; motions which are regulated both in their direction and quantity by circumstances altogether external to the moving body. A stone, for example, dropped in the air falls downwards in the direction of a line tending nearly to the earth's centre, and the result is the same, in whatever quarter of the globe the experiment is made; so that the *direction* of the stone's motion varies in an infinite number of ways, according to external circumstances. If the stone be carried to different heights above the earth's surface, the accelerating force of its gravity to the earth varies with its distance to the earth's centre, according to a general rule; —decreasing, viz., in the same proportion in which the square of the distance increases. The gravity, besides, of one body to another increases both in proportion to its own quantity of matter and to the quantity of matter in the body to

which it gravitates. How is it possible to suppose that all this arises from an inherent and essential activity in matter, unless we likewise suppose that every body is not only essentially conscious of the quantity of matter it contains, but is essentially capable of perceiving the quantities of matter in other bodies, together with their situations and distances? It was not, therefore, without reason that Hobbes, after having ascribed to matter a power of self-motion, supposed that it was also endued with *an obscure sense and perception;* and that it differed only from animated beings in wanting the faculty of memory and organs of sense and motion as perfect as theirs. The doctrine, indeed, is too absurd to require a serious examination; but it is evidently a necessary consequence of the scheme of Materialism, and it has accordingly been adopted by various other writers, who had a leaning, either avowed or secret, to the same principles.

II.—It has been supposed that the phenomena of nature result from certain *Active Powers communicated to Matter at its first formation.*

Thus Mr. Derham says:—"It hath pleased the Author of all Things to *inspirit* the particles of matter with a certain active power called gravity." And in another passage:—"This attractive or gravitating power I take to be congenial to matter, and imprinted on all the matter of the universe by the Creator's *Fiat* at the creation." *

Of this doctrine of Derham's it seems to be a sufficient refutation to observe, that if matter be at all inactive, it must be essentially inactive, and cannot possibly be rendered otherwise any more than it could continue to be matter after its extension and figure were destroyed.

It is indeed possible to conceive, as some have actually done, a mind connected with every particle of matter,—a supposition which, however unsupported by proof, involves no absurdity nor contradiction. But this is not Derham's supposition; for he plainly understood that the active power of gravity was communicated to the matter itself. His supposition, therefore, is perfectly analogous to Locke's doctrine, about the possibility of superadding to the other qualities of matter *a power of thinking.* Indeed Derham's hypothesis needs that of Locke to make it complete; for how could two bodies adjust their gravitating forces towards each other, without a consciousness of their mutual distance?

III.—Somewhat akin to this supposition is that which is implied in the language of those philosophers who ascribe the phenomena of nature to certain *General Laws established by the Deity.*

With respect to this language, I have elsewhere had occasion to observe, that it is entirely metaphorical, and that although it may be convenient from its conciseness, it suggests to the fancy an analogy which is extremely apt to mislead.

As the order of society results from the general rules prescribed by the legislator, so the order of the universe is conceived to result from certain Laws established by the Deity. Thus it is customary to say, that the fall of heavy bodies towards the earth's surface, the ebbing and flowing of the sea, the motions of the planets in their orbits, are consequences of the *law* of Gravitation. In one sense this is abundantly accurate, but it must not be too literally understood. In those political associations from which the metaphor is borrowed, the laws are addressed to

* [*Hylozoism* would only ambiguously denominate this theory.]

rational and voluntary agents, who are able to comprehend their meaning, and regulate their conduct accordingly. But in the phenomena exhibited by the material world, the order we see not only implies *intelligence* in its first conception, but *power* to account for its continued existence; or, in other words, it is the same being who enacts and executes the law. If the word *law*, therefore, be in such instances literally understood, it must mean a uniform mode of acting prescribed to the Deity by himself; and it has accordingly been explained in this sense by the best writers on natural religion, particularly by Dr. Clarke in a passage formerly quoted, [*supra*, p. 29.]

IV.—A fourth supposition is that of Dr. Cudworth, who ascribes the phenomena of the material world to what he calls *a Plastic or formative Nature*, or (according to his own definition of it) to "*a vital and spiritual but unintelligent and necessary agent, created by the Deity for the execution of his purposes.*"* The same observations that were made upon the *second* of the foregoing hypotheses are applicable to this doctrine, which, notwithstanding the high merits of its author, is perhaps the most unphilosophical of any mentioned in this enumeration. It differs, indeed, from that to which I have assigned the *second* place in my arrangement only in this, that it presents the same idea under a form somewhat more mysterious, attempting to conceal its native absurdity under a veil of scholastic words more likely to impose on an unlearned ear.

V.—Dissatisfied with all these doctrines, a late author of genius and learning has made an attempt to revive the *ancient theory of mind;* the only effectual bulwark, according to him, against the Materialism and Atheism of modern times.

The general principle of this theory is, that *every Motion is not only Produced but Continued by Mind.* Mind, we are told, is that which moves—*Body*, is that which is moved. Every particle of matter, therefore, Lord Monboddo supposes to be animated by different minds. Thus there is one mind which he calls the elemental mind, which is the source of the cohesion of bodies. There is another mind, which is the cause of their gravitation; and so on in other instances. Even in the case of motion produced by impulse, he holds that the impulse is only the *occasion* of the motion. The motion is *continued* in consequence of the agency of mind excited by the impulse; for a continued motion implies a continued activity. The motions of the planets round the sun are not the result of a constant tangential and a constant centripetal tendency, (according to the ideas of Newton and his followers,) but are carried on by minds which animate the planets in a way analogous to that in which the motions of animals are produced. The only difference is this, that he supposes the minds which animate the planets to be void of intelligence, and, as he expresses it, to be merely principles of motion.

Before I proceed to make any observations on this doctrine, it may be amusing to turn our attention to the different fancies which have been entertained on the subject by those philosophers who have had a leaning to similar theories. A short account of some of them (sufficiently accurate for our present purpose) is contained in the following passage of Maupertuis.

"'Les Egyptiens en firent des dieux," the author is speaking of the stars, "et parmi les Grecs les Stoïciens leur attribuèrent des âmes divines. Anaxagoras fut

* [*Intellectual System*, Book I. chap. iii. *Digression* appended to it, *Concerning the Plastic Life of Nature*, especially sect. 5.]

condamné comme un impie pour avoir nié l'âme du soleil. Cleanthe et Platon furent sur cela plus orthodoxes. Philon donne aux astres, non seulement des âmes, mais des âmes très pures. Origenes étoit dans la même opinion : il a cru que les âmes de ces corps ne leur avoient pas toujours appartenu, et qu'elles viendroient un jour à en être séparées.

"Avicenne a donné aux astres une âme intellectuelle et sensitive. Simplicius les croit douées de la vue, de l'ouie, et du tact. Tycho et Kepler admettent des âmes dans les étoiles et dans les planètes. Baranzanus, religieux Barnabite, astronome et théologien, leur attribue une certaine âme moyenne entre l'intellectuelle et la brute. A la vérité, St. Thomas, qui dans différens endroits de ses ouvrages, leur avoit accordé assez libéralement des âmes intellectuelles, semble dans son septième chapitre, *Contra Gentes*, s'être rétracté, et ne vouloir plus leur donner que des âmes sensitives."[1]

I shall add to this detail a few detached passages from the classical writers, to show how very generally these ideas have prevailed.

"Ea quoque (sidera) rectissime," says Balbus the Stoic in Cicero, "et animantia esse, et sentire atque intelligere dicantur."—*De Nat. Deor.* Lib. II. c. xv.

"Probabile est, præstantem intelligentiam in sideribus esse."—Ibid. xvi.

Virgil:—

"Immissæque feræ sylvis, et sidera cœlo."—*Georg.* II. 342.

Ovid:—

"Neu regio foret ulla suis animantibus orba,
Astra tenent cœleste solum formæque Deorum;
Terra feras cepit."—*Metam.* I. 75.

Statius represents *Aurora* as driving the stars with a whip.

"Tempus erat, junctos cum jam soror ignea Phœbi
Sentit equos, penitusque cavam sub luce paratâ
Oceani mugire domum: seseque vagantem
Colligit; et moto leviter fugat astra flagello."—*Theb.* viii. 274.[2]

Maupertuis himself, in his *Système de la Nature*,[3] supposes every elementary particle of matter to be endued not only with a power of motion but with intelligence,—"Quelque principe d'intelligence, semblable à ce que nous appelons désir, aversion, mémoire."—This performance of Maupertuis was published first in Latin, under the title of a "*Thesis defended at Erlangen in Germany, by Dr. Baumann.*" It excited a good deal of attention and opposition at Paris, and among its other opposers was the celebrated *M. Diderot.* Maupertuis replied to his objections in form; and it is from this answer alone that I know anything of Diderot's system. From Maupertuis's account it appears that Diderot objected to the *Système de la Nature* as favouring materialism, and proposed to substitute in

[1] *Œuvres* de Maupertuis, Vol. II. p. 209.

[2] See Spence's *Polymetis*, p. 179.

[3] It may be necessary to caution some of my readers against confounding the *Système de la Nature* of Maupertuis, with a book published a few years after with the same title, under the name of Mirabaud, but now universally understood to have been the work of Baron d'Holbach. See Second Part of the *First Dissertation prefixed to the Supplement to the Encyclopædia Britannica*, p. 132.

place of it another theory, according to which the elementary particles of matter were supposed to want intelligence, but to be endued with a power of sensation,—"Une sensation semblable à *un toucher obtus et sourd.*" One can hardly avoid asking with Maupertuis—"Est-ce sérieusement que M. Diderot propose cette différence?" At any rate, it is surely an object of some curiosity to trace the wanderings of Diderot's imagination in this metaphysical region, till it appears to have finally settled in an undisguised system of Materialism and Atheism. After all, some may perhaps think that the question of Maupertuis may not unreasonably be repeated, Est-ce sérieusement que M. Diderot propose ce système?

In the extract from Maupertuis formerly quoted, the name of Kepler is mentioned among those who have given countenance to the supposition of the stars being animated. One very remarkable passage to this purpose occurs in Kepler's commentaries on the motions of the planet Mars, and it agrees in many respects with the doctrine maintained by the learned author of Ancient Metaphysics. The two theories, however, differ in this, that Kepler supposes the minds which animate the planets to be possessed of intelligence, and of powers of perception far superior to ours. "Nego," says he in one passage, "ullum motum perennem *non rectum* a Deo conditum esse præsidio mentali destitutum." And again, "Hujus *motoris* manifestum est duo fore munia; alterum ut facultate polleat transvectandi corporis; alterum ut scientiâ præditus sit inveniendi circularem limitem per illam puram auram ætheriam nullis hujusmodi regionibus distinctam."—P. 8. In another part of the same work he seriously gives it as his opinion, that the minds of the planets must have a power of making observations on the sun's apparent diameter, that they may thereby be enabled to regulate their motions so as to describe areas proportional to the times. "Credibile est itaque, si quâ facultate præditi sint *motores* illi observandæ hujus diametri, eâm tanto esse argutiorem quam sunt oculi nostri, quanto opus ejus et perennis motio nostris turbulentis et confusis negotiis est constantior.

"An ergo binos singulis planetis tribues oculos, Keplere? Nequaquam. Neque est necesse. Neque enim, ut moveri possint, pedes ipsis atque alæ sunt tribuendæ."

Of these two theories that of Kepler seems to be the more philosophical; for it is plainly an attempt to bring the phenomena of moving bodies under the class of animal life. When we discover that a motion is produced by an animal we inquire no farther; for we know from experience that animals have a power of beginning motion; and if it could have been made appear that the phenomena of the planets were analogous to the motions of living and intelligent beings, the discovery might justly have been regarded as a step gained in the study of nature. The minds which, according to the other theory, are said to animate the planets, are analogous to nothing of which we have any experience; nor in this instance does the word *mind* convey to us any more information than the words *attraction* and *gravitation*. They are all names for the unknown cause of a known effect.

What Maupertuis has observed with respect to the hypothesis of a *plastic nature* is equally applicable to that of "principles of motion void of intelligence."—"Les uns ont imaginés des natures plastiques, qui sans intelligence et sans matière exécutent dans l'univers tout ce que la matière et l'intelligence pourroient

exécuter."—"L'expérience nous apprend, quoique nous ne puissions savoir comment la chose l'exécute, que des êtres dans lesquels se trouvent l'intelligence et la matière peuvent agir sur le corps: Mais l'expérience ne nous apprend point et l'on ne concevra jamais, comment des substances immatérielles, sans le concours immédiat de l'Etre tout puissant, le pourroient faire. La chose sera encore plus incompréhensible si l'on entend que ces substances immatérielles soient de plus privées d'intelligence. Car alors non seulement nous n'avons plus d'idée qui puisse nous servir à expliquer leurs opérations, mais nous n'avons plus même d'idée qui puisse nous faire concevoir leur existence."[1]

To these observations on this theory of mind I have only to add, that in its tendency it agrees perfectly with the scheme of *Materialism*. This is undoubtedly not the idea of *some* of its patrons who have flattered themselves with the belief, that if it were generally adopted it would banish Materialism and Atheism from philosophy.[2] Nay, one of them has ventured to assert, that whoever calls it in question, must, whether he knows it or not, be an atheist. "Every man," says the author of *Ancient Metaphysics*, "must of necessity be an Atheist, who holds that matter can of itself either begin or continue motion." The justness of this conclusion I cannot admit, even with respect to those who hold the absurd opinion, that matter can of itself *begin* motion; for although the scheme of Materialism destroys those arguments for the existence of a Deity which are founded on the beginning of motion, it leaves all those in full force which are founded on the appearances of design in the universe. Admitting, however, that the inference is just, the charge may be fairly retorted on those who support the theory of mind. The Materialists hold that matter has a power of self-motion. The other philosophers contend that every particle of matter has a mind or principle of motion united with it. According to both systems there is no necessity for having recourse to the Deity for the beginning of motion; for, according to both of them,

[1] *Système de la Nature*, sect. 8.

[2] I would not have dwelt so long on this subject, had not Lord Monboddo himself communicated to me some letters which passed between him and the late Bishop Horsley, in which the learned Editor and Commentator of Newton, after bestowing the highest praise on his Lordship's attempt to revive the ancient Theory of Mind, adds, that if it should draw the attention it deserved, "it would drive Atheists and Materialists into holes and corners." This correspondence I have no doubt still exists, and I trust it will sooner or later be communicated to the public. The only fragment of it which Lord Monboddo has published is to be found in the second volume of his *Ancient Metaphysics*, pp. 357, 358, where Dr. Horsley has fairly acknowledged that "Sir Isaac Newton's First Law of Motion cannot be defended upon the principles of sound philosophy."—"I believe, with the author of *Ancient Metaphysics*, that some active principle is necessary for the continuance, as well as for the beginning of motion. I know that many Newtonians will not allow this. I believe they are misled, as I myself have formerly been misled, by the expression, *a state of motion*. Motion is a change; a continuation of motion is a further change; a further change is a repeated effect; a repeated effect requires a repeating cause. State implies the contrary of change; and motion being change, *a state of motion* is a contradiction in terms."

At an earlier period of Dr. Horsley's life he seems to have thought differently. His first mathematical publication, if I recollect right, was a pamphlet entitled, *The Power of God deduced from the computable instantaneous productions of it in the Solar System*. 1767.—At this time, so far from devolving with Lord Monboddo the task of maintaining the planetary motions upon a sort of immaterial machinery, he agreed with Dr. Clarke in resolving it into the constant and incessant agency of the Deity; and even went so far as to attempt a calculation of the force exerted by him every instant to preserve the solar system in order.

there is a power of self-motion in every particle of matter, and the only difference is, that the one system supposes the power to belong to the particle itself, the other supposes that it belongs to a distinct principle, with which it is inseparably united.

As I do not know that this theory of mind has gained many proselytes in modern times, I shall not enter into a more particular examination of it, but shall content myself with remarking the illustration it affords, of the influence of that principle of our nature which has led men in all ages to ascribe the changes that take place in the state of the universe to the operation of powers superior to mere matter.

VI.—The last supposition we shall take notice of upon this subject is that of the philosophers who conceive that *the universe is a Machine formed and put in motion by the Deity;* and that the multiplicity of effects that take place may perhaps have all proceeded from one single act of his power. In this view of the mechanism of the universe, Descartes and Leibnitz agreed, notwithstanding the wide diversity of their systems in other respects.

Of these two philosophers, the former not only affirmed in general terms that the universe is a great machine, of which all the different parts are mechanically connected, but attempted to explain in particular in what manner it might have assumed its present form, and may for ever be preserved by mechanical principles. The whole of space he supposed to be replenished with an ether or dense fluid, and all the phenomena we see to be the effects of impulsion. Thus he accounts for the gravity of terrestrial bodies from the centrifugal force of the ether revolving round the earth, which he imagined must impel bodies downwards, that have not so great a centrifugal force, much in the same manner as a fluid impels a body upwards that is immersed in it, and has a less specific gravity than it. He pretended to explain the phenomena of the magnet, and to account for everything in nature from the same principles.

The great argument which Descartes alleged for his system was, that the same quantity of motion is always preserved in the universe, and passes from one portion of matter to another without undergoing any change in the whole; and this he thought was sufficiently proved by the constancy and immutability of the Divine Nature. But with those who attend to facts this metaphysical reasoning will have little weight: And fortunately the facts which disprove it are such as are familiar to every person acquainted with the first elements of physics. In the composition of motion, absolute motion, it is manifest, is always diminished, as in the resolution of motion it is increased. Absolute motion, too, is diminished, in many cases, in the collisions of bodies that have an imperfect elasticity, and in some cases it is increased in the collisions of elastic bodies. To obviate these objections, Leibnitz (who, as I already said, agreed with Descartes in considering the universe as a machine) was led to distinguish between the quantity of motion of bodies and the force of bodies. The former he owns is perpetually varying; but the latter, he maintains, remains invariably the same. This new modification, however, of the principle does not render it the more consistent with the phenomena; even although, with Leibnitz, we should measure the force of bodies (not by their simple velocities, but) by the squares of their velocities. If all bodies indeed were perfectly elastic, the principle would possess some plausibility; but it is well known

that no such body has hitherto been discovered. When any two bodies meet with equal motions they rebound with less motions, and force is lost in the collision. If the bodies are soft, the force of both is destroyed. It was to reconcile these facts with his general principle that Leibnitz had recourse to his hypothesis of a perfectly elastic fluid, which, according to him, in such cases as I now mentioned, receives and retains the forces of the impinging bodies. But, not to urge that this is a mere hypothesis, invented to answer a particular purpose, how shall the perfect elasticity of the supposed fluid be explained on the known principles of mechanism? And till this is done the Leibnitian theory of the mechanism of the universe must be allowed to be incomplete.

Beside, however, these objections, which apply particularly to the mechanical explanations of the universe given by Descartes and Leibnitz, there is one which seems to be conclusive, not only against *them*, but against all other attempts of the same kind that can be made. This objection is founded on the vague and indistinct idea of mechanism on which all such attempts proceed. This word properly expresses a combination of *natural powers* to produce a certain effect. When such a combination is successful, a machine once set a going will sometimes continue to perform its office for a considerable time without requiring the interposition of the artist. And hence we are led to conclude that the case may perhaps be similar with respect to the universe when once put into motion by the Deity. But the falseness of the analogy appears from this, that the moving force in every machine is some *natural power*, such as gravity or elasticity; and, therefore, the very idea of mechanism presupposes the existence of those active powers of which it is the professed object of a mechanical theory of the universe to give an explanation.

NOTE B, (Book III. p. 34.)—*Dr. Parr on the Authorship of the Treatise DE MUNDO.*

The following note (which was kindly transmitted to me by Sir James Mackintosh) contains the opinion of Dr. Parr upon the much controverted point, whether Aristotle was really the author of the Treatise *De Mundo*, commonly printed as part of his works. It was, alas! the last communication I had with that truly learned and excellent person.

"I told Sir James Mackintosh and Mr. Dugald Stewart that the book *De Mundo* was not written by Aristotle; and to such illustrious men I ought to state my reasons for an opinion so confidently expressed. In my Aristotle, I have marked other works which I hold to be spurious. I stated before, and I now state again, as the ground of my opinion, the total want of resemblance to the style of Aristotle. My sagacious friends will promptly assent when I tell them, that in the third chapter of the Liber *De Mundo*, the writer mentions the islands of Great Britain, quite unknown to the Greeks in Aristotle's time.

"'Εν τῷ 'Ωκεανῷ νῆσοί μίγισταί τε συγχάνουσιν οὖσαι δύο, Βρεττανικαὶ λεγόμεναι, Αλβιον καὶ Ἰέρνη, τῶν προϊστορημένων μείζους, κ.τ.λ.'

"I suppose Mr. Stewart and Sir James to have access to Fabricii *Bibliotheca Græca* by Harles. Now, in Vol. III. pp. 232, 233, there is much learned matter

upon this work. The title is wrong; for it should be, as we learn from Stobæus, a Letter Περὶ τοῦ Παντός. Towards the close of the addition by Harles and his friends we have these words:—

"'Magister Goerenz, in Disputatione—*De Libri* Περὶ Κοσμοῦ, *qui inter Aristotelis scripta reperitur, auctore*, Wittebergæ, m. Aprili 1792, illam sententiam, quæ Aristotelem auctorem respuit, probabiliorem animadvertens, primum examinat dissentientium rationes, tum argumenta alia, ab aliis omissa, a Kappio tamen partim adlata et exposita, cogit, et contra Petitum ac Battesium tela potissimum dirigit. Denique suspicatur, auctorem Aristotelis nomen libro suo quæstus causa supposuisse, qui eum regi Ptolemæo Philadelpho pro Aristotelis libro venderet. Quidquid est, satis evictum esse puto a Kappio et Goerenzio, superiorum VV. DD. vestigia prementibus, Aristotelem non fuisse libelli parentem.'.

"You will think that Harles thinks as I do. In p. 347, you will find among the editions of parts of Aristotle, some account of this book *De Mundo*.—Vulcanius says, the arguments of those who deny the book to be Aristotle's are *plumbea*. 'Vulcanius mire laudat,' the version of Apuleius.

"Now, hear what is said, p. 232, on this work of Apuleius, and is said well.—

"'Quum Apuleius libri sui *De Mundo* initio non dicat, se versionem libri Græci scribere, sed se satis clare conditorem illius libri profiteatur, hinc credo, Apuleium verum esse illius libri auctorem; Græcum vero textum esse versionem.'—Heumannus.

"I agree with Heumannus; for the matter and the manner suits well the known age of Apuleius.

"Let me advert to another subject.—Mr. Stewart has written wisely and virtuously upon Atheism, direct or indirect. I agree with him about Spinoza, and I almost agree with him about Hobbes. But I do earnestly entreat Sir James and Mr. Stewart to bestow great attention to what is said pp. 377, 378, of Vol. III. of Fabricius.* The observations and cautions of Harles should be attended to. I am sure that Sir James and Mr. Stewart will thank me for pointing out these two pages. . . . . "S. Parr.

"*Dec.* 10, 1821."

Note C, (Book III. p. 113.)—*On the Proportion of the Sexes as born.*

That in this part of the world the sexes everywhere approach to equality has been long observed. Major Graunt, (who assisted Sir William Petty in his inquiries relative to Political Arithmetic,) from an examination both of the London and country Bills, states 14 males to 13 females; from whence he infers that "the Christian religion, prohibiting polygamy, is more agreeable to the law of nature than Mahometanism and others that allow of it."

"This proportion of 14 to 13," says Dr. Derham, "I imagine is nearly just. In the 100 years of my own parish register, although the burials of males and females were nearly equal, (being 636 males, and 623 females in all that time,) yet

* [These pages contain, in various applications, cautions by Fabricius and Harles, against the rash imputation of Atheism. Mere *Materialism* is held not to be a sufficient warrant. The divine *Prescience of Contingents*, or of free actions, and *Infinity*, it is, of course, taken for granted, are by us inconceivable.—*Ed.*]

there were baptized 709 males, and but 675 females; which numbers are in the proportion of 13·7 to 13."[1]

Of late years this subject has been examined with far greater accuracy than had been attempted before; by Mr. Suessmilch in Germany, by Mr. Wargentin in Sweden, and by Dr. Price in England. From their combined observations it seems to be established beyond a doubt, *First*, that the *number of males and of females born invariably approach to equality. Secondly*, that the excess is in favour of the males. *Thirdly*, that this excess is partly counterbalanced by their greater mortality.

With respect to other parts of the globe, our information is much less correct; and here accordingly speculative men have found themselves more at liberty to indulge their ingenuity and fancy. "In Japan," says Montesquieu, upon the authority of Kæmpfer, "there are born rather more girls than boys; and at Bantam the former exceed the latter in the proportion of ten to one." Hence he seems disposed to infer, that the law which permits polygamy is physically conformable to the inhabitants of such countries; a conclusion which some other authors have apprehended to be farther confirmed by the prematurity and rapid decay of female beauty in some regions of the East.

The same argument has been much and very confidently insisted on by Mr. Bruce in his *Travels to Abyssinia*, where he attempts to confirm it by some facts which fell under his own personal knowledge. To his very strong statements may be opposed the testimony of other travellers not less entitled to credit. The assertion of Montesquieu, that at Bantam the number of females exceeds that of males in the proportion of ten to one, is directly contradicted by Mr. Marsden in his very able and interesting account of Sumatra, where he resided a considerable number of years. "I can take upon me to assert," says he, "that the proportion of the sexes throughout Sumatra does not differ sensibly from that ascertained in Europe; *nor could I ever learn from the inhabitants of the many eastern islands whom I have conversed with, that they had remarked any disproportion in this respect.*"

The following passage from a most authentic and judicious traveller is still more full and satisfactory. The author I quote is M. Niebuhr, whose *Travels through Arabia and other countries in the East* have acquired such great and deserved reputation.

"Much has been said in Europe concerning the origin of the practice of polygamy, so generally prevalent through the East. Supposing that a plurality of wives is not barely allowed by law, but takes place in fact, some of our philosophers have imagined that in hot countries more women than men are born; but I have already stated that some nations avail not themselves of the permission given by the Musselman law for one to marry several wives. It would be unfair to judge of the manners of a whole people by the fastidious luxury of the great. It is vanity that peoples seraglios, and that chiefly with slaves, most of whom are only slaves to a few favourite women. *The number of female servants in Europe, who are in the same manner condemned in a great measure to celibacy, is equal or superior to that of those who are confined in the harems of the East.*

[1] *Physico-Theology*, pp. 175, 176. See on this subject a French work of high authority, entitled *Métrologie*, p. 485. Also, Moheau, *Recherches sur la Population.*

" It is true that European clergymen and physicians settled in the East have presumed that rather more girls than boys are born there. I obtained some lists of Christian baptisms in the East; but some of these were filled with inconsistencies; and in the others the number by which the females born exceeded the males was indeed very trifling. I have reason, therefore, to conclude, that *the proportion between the male and the female births is the same here as elsewhere.*"[1]

I shall conclude this note, by once more recalling the attention of the reader to the important fact, that from the latest and most accurate observations made both in the old and new world, Laplace has thought himself authorized to conclude, that this balance between the sexes (with a trifling preponderance in favour of the male) may be regarded as *an universal law with regard to the human race.* In forming this conclusion, Laplace appears to have been much struck with the result of Humboldt's researches in America, where he found that even between the tropics the same proportion of male births to female obtained as was observed at Paris. The sanction thus deliberately given by this illustrious mathematician to the universality of the fact, will, I hope, in the opinion of the great majority of my readers, add more weight to the argument in favour of design than his reasonings quoted in the text furnish against it.

In confirmation of Laplace's conclusion with respect to the universality of this law, I am assured by the best authority, that, from a recent census in our Indian empire, it appears that the very same proportion between the sexes takes place there as in Europe.

Note D, (Book III. p. 198.)—*D'Alembert quoted again.*

In a note which the reader will find in p. 198, I have quoted a very remarkable passage from D'Alembert's *Eloge* on M. de Sacy. I am now to quote *another* equally striking from the preface prefixed by the same author to his Academical *Eloges.* " *Celui qui se marie,* dit Bacon, *donne des ôtages à la fortune.* L'homme de lettres qui tient ou qui aspire à l'Académie donne des ôtages à la décence. . . . S'il y avoit eu une académie à Rome et qu'elle y eût été florissante et honorée, Horace eût été flatté d'y être assis à côté du sage Virgile son ami: que lui en eût-il couté pour y parvenir? d'effacer de ses vers quelques obscénités qui les déparent; le poëte n'auroit rien perdu, et le citoyen auroit fait son devoir. Par la même raison, Lucrèce, jaloux de l'honneur d'appeler Ciceron son confrère, n'eût conservé de son poëme que les morceaux sublimes où il est si grand peintre, et n'auroit supprimé que ceux où il donne, en vers prosaïques, des leçons *d'Athéisme,* c'est-à-dire où il fait des efforts, aussi coupables que foibles, *pour ôter un frein à la méchanceté puissante, et une consolation à la vertu malheureuse.*"[2]

These two quotations from D'Alembert (neither of which I recollect to have seen referred to in any English publication) present, it must be owned, a strong contrast to some passages in his correspondence with Voltaire and the King of

[1] Heron's Translation, Vol. II. p. 218.

[2] The words printed in *Italics* in this passage are distinguished in the same way in the original.

Prussia, which have been industriously brought forward in some periodical works of this country. Which of these inconsistent passages express the author's real sentiments I shall not presume to decide, but I thought it an act of justice to call the attention of my readers to both of them. Indeed, in cases of this sort the only question with the reader ought to be, on what occasions an author spoke the truth, —*not when* he expressed his own opinion. "Qui autem requirunt," says Cicero, with his usual good sense and philosophical liberality, "quid quaque de re ipsi sentiamus, curiosiùs id faciunt quam necesse est. Non enim tam auctores in disputando quam rationis momenta quærenda sunt. Quin etiam obest plerumque iis, qui discere volunt, auctoritas eorum, qui sè docere profitentur. Desinunt enim suum judicium adhibere: id habent ratum, quod ab eo, quem probant judicatum vident."[1]

[1] *De Natura Deorum*, Lib. I. cap. v.

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